



RAM SHASTRI

CRUSADER FOR JUSTICE AND TRUTH

Vol 698





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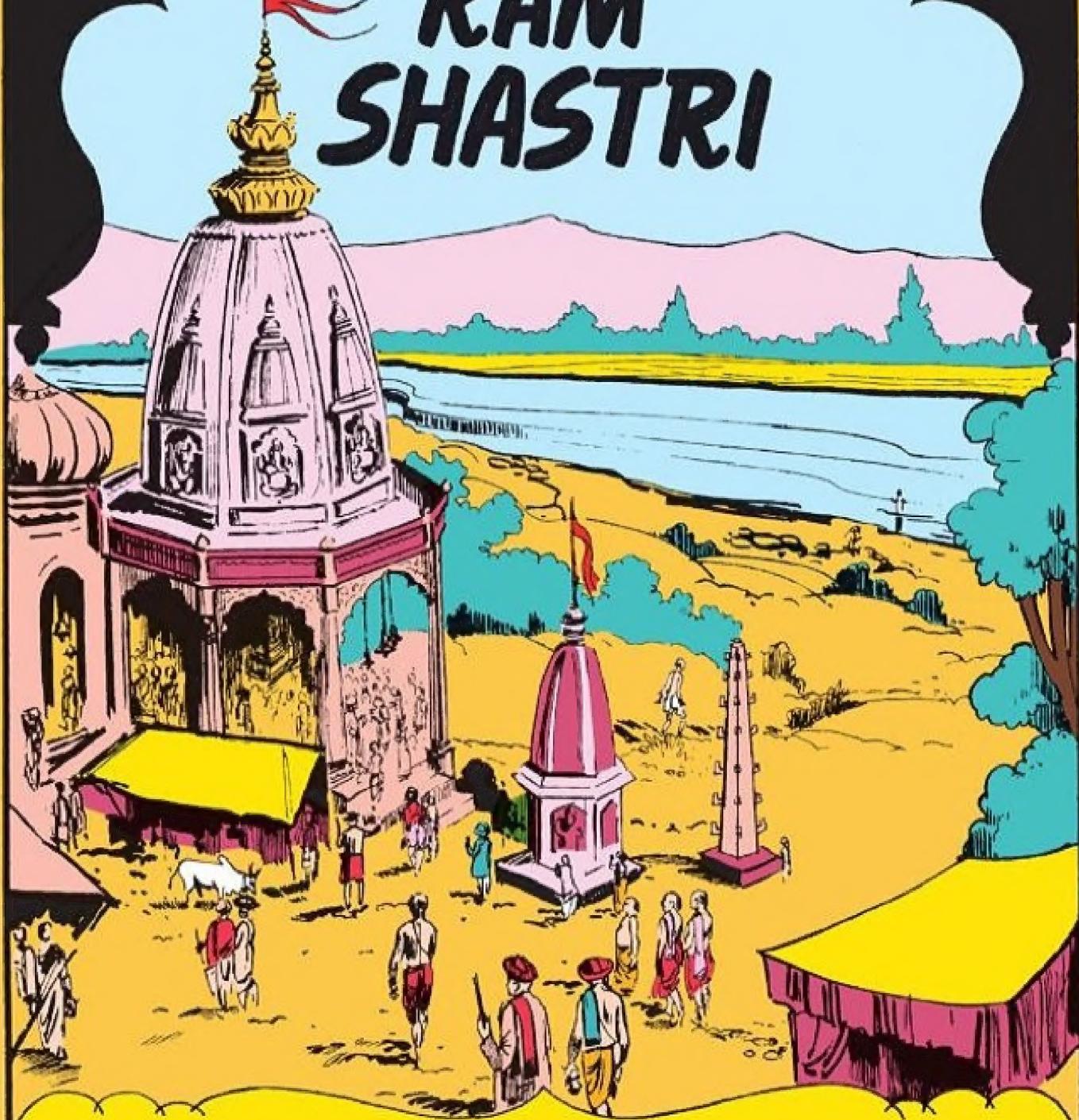
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RAM SHASTRI



THE ANNUAL TEMPLE FESTIVAL WAS IN FULL SWING AT MAHULI KSHETRA IN SATARA DISTRICT, WHERE RAM SHASTRI SPENT HIS EARLY CHILDHOOD. AFTER THE PUJA, DONATIONS WOULD BE GIVEN TO ALL QUALIFIED BRAHMAN STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS PRESENT.

AS THE NOTES OF THE CHANTS ROSE
INTO THE AIR—

RAM WAS FROLICKING IN THE WATER AND TEASING
HIS MORE SERIOUS PLAYMATES.

RAMYA! RAMYA-A!

YOU ARE WASTING
YOUR TIME WITH THOSE
HYMNS. GET BACK
INTO THE WATER.
LET'S HAVE A RACE.

RAMYA! CAN'T
YOU HEAR ME?
COME OUT IMMEDIATELY
AND DRY YOURSELF.

RAMYA CLAMBERED ONTO THE BANK.

WHAT'S THE
MATTER,
UNCLE?
HAS ANYTHING
HAPPENED?

THE DONATIONS FOR THE
BRAHMANS ARE ON.
RUN ALONG. GET WHAT
YOU CAN.

BUT UNCLE,
I AM NEITHER A
STUDENT NOR A
SCHOLAR.

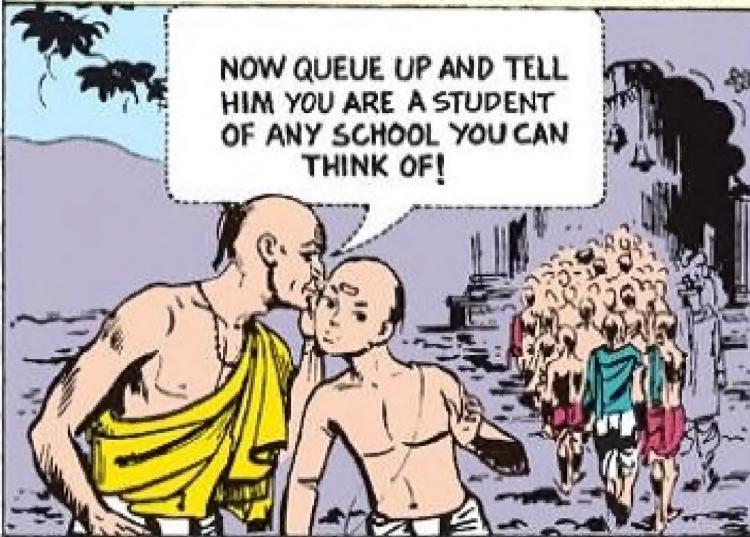
DON'T ARGUE.
DO AS I SAY.
AFTER ALL I FEED AND
CLOTHE YOU.

RAM OBEDIENTLY FOLLOWED HIS UNCLE. BUT—

I WILL NOT ACCEPT
ANY DONATION!!
I WILL NOT...

EACH BRAHMAN HAD TO DECLARE HIS CREDENTIALS AND ONLY THEN COLLECT HIS GIFTS.

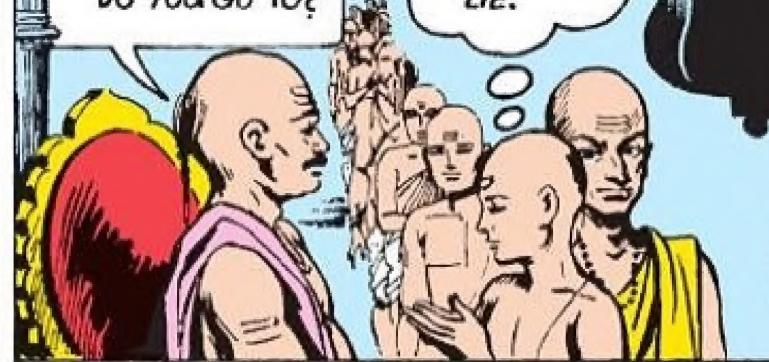
NOW QUEUE UP AND TELL HIM YOU ARE A STUDENT OF ANY SCHOOL YOU CAN THINK OF!



WHEN IT WAS RAM'S TURN—

WHICH SCHOOL DO YOU GO TO?

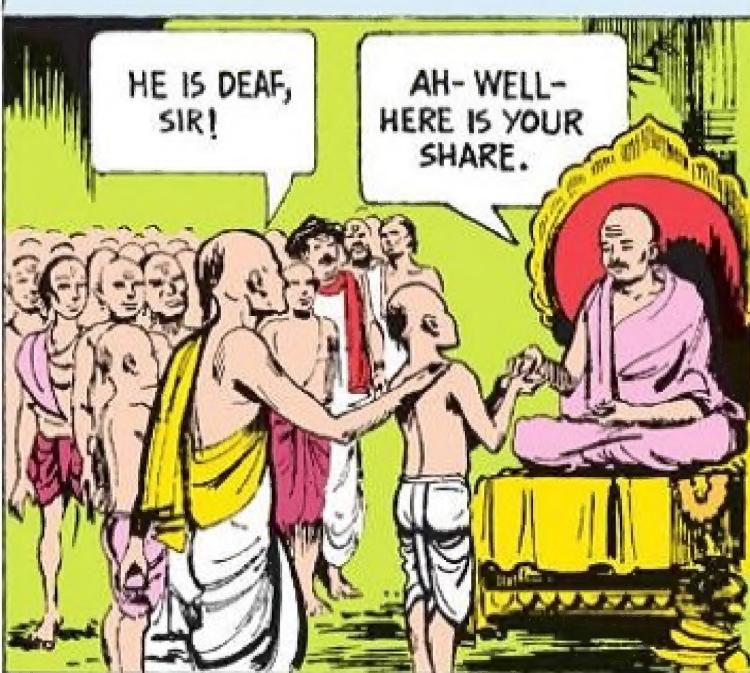
I WILL NOT LIE.



RAM HUNG HIS HEAD IN SHAME, REFUSING TO LIE.

HE IS DEAF, SIR!

AH- WELL- HERE IS YOUR SHARE.



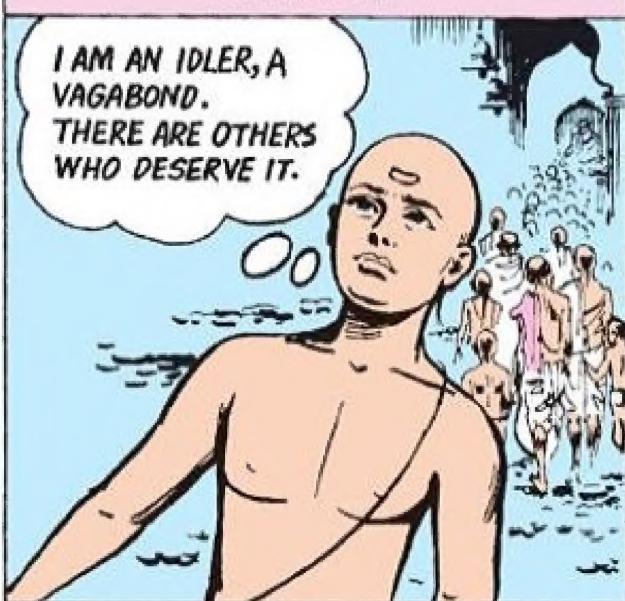
RAM TOOK THE MONEY MECHANICALLY AND WALKED AWAY, UTTERLY MISERABLE.

I HAVE NO RIGHT...

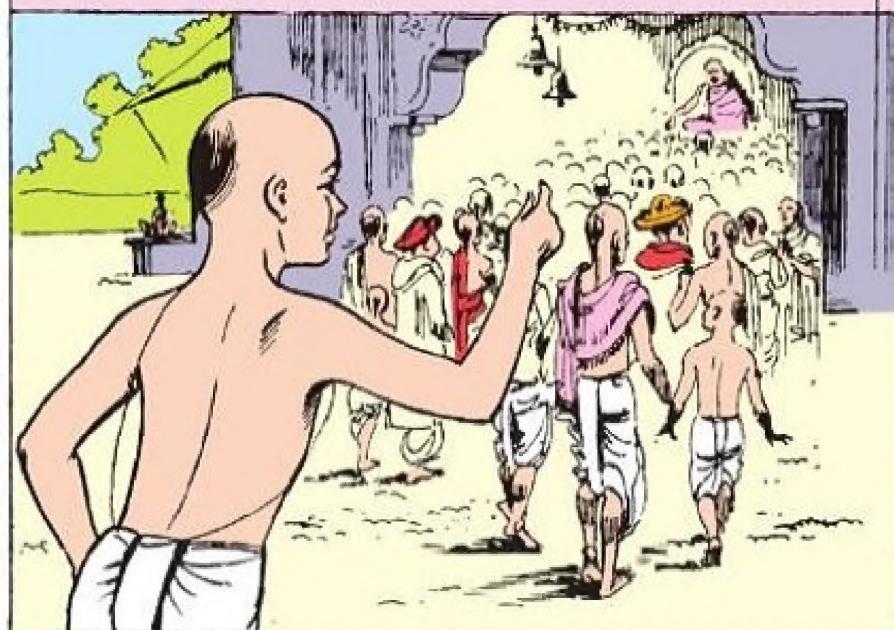


HE HAD NOT COVERED MUCH DISTANCE. THE GUILT OF FALSEHOOD WEIGHED UPON HIM.

I AM AN IDLER, A VAGABOND. THERE ARE OTHERS WHO DESERVE IT.

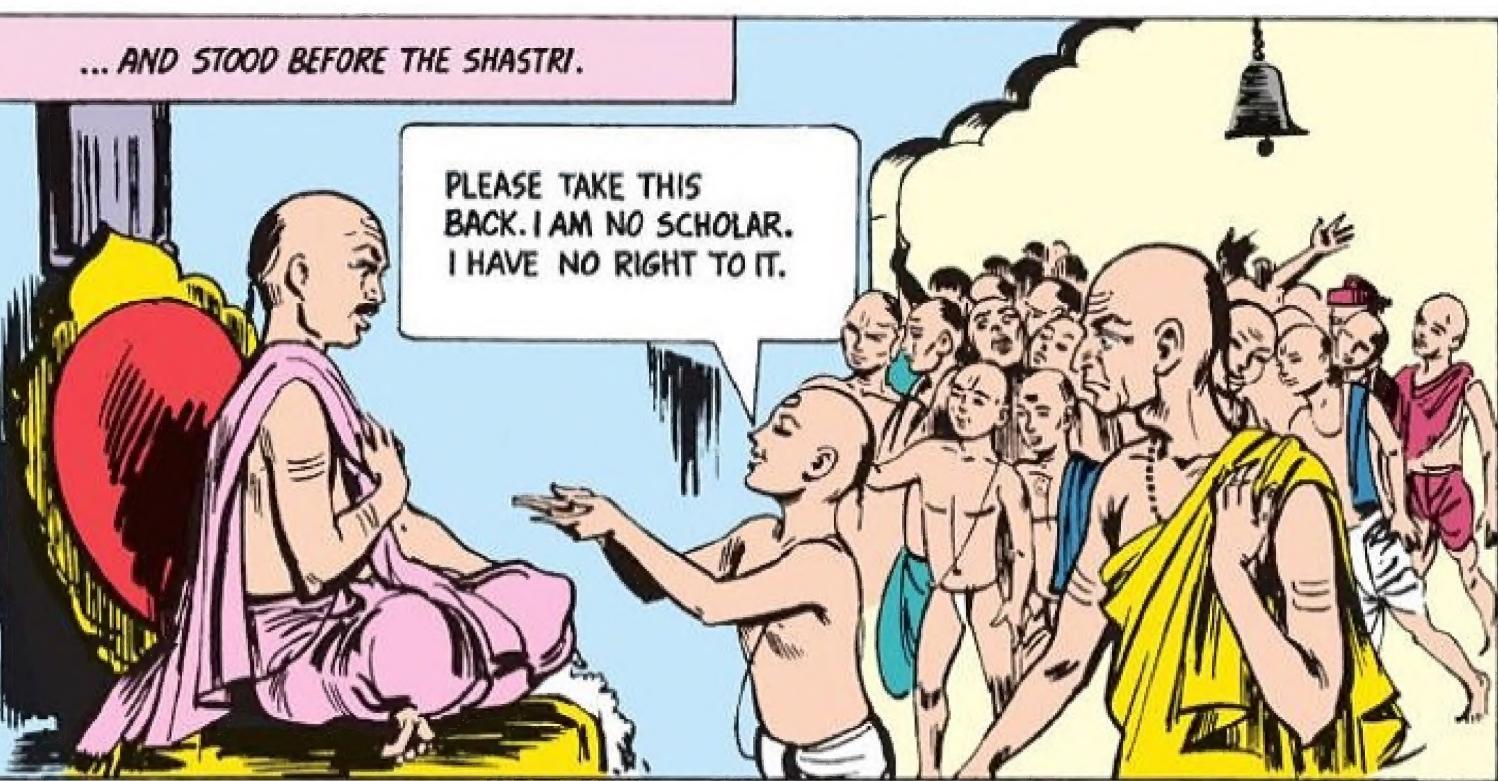


TURNING ON HIS TRACKS, HE PUSHED HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWDS...



... AND STOOD BEFORE THE SHASTRI.

PLEASE TAKE THIS BACK. I AM NO SCHOLAR. I HAVE NO RIGHT TO IT.

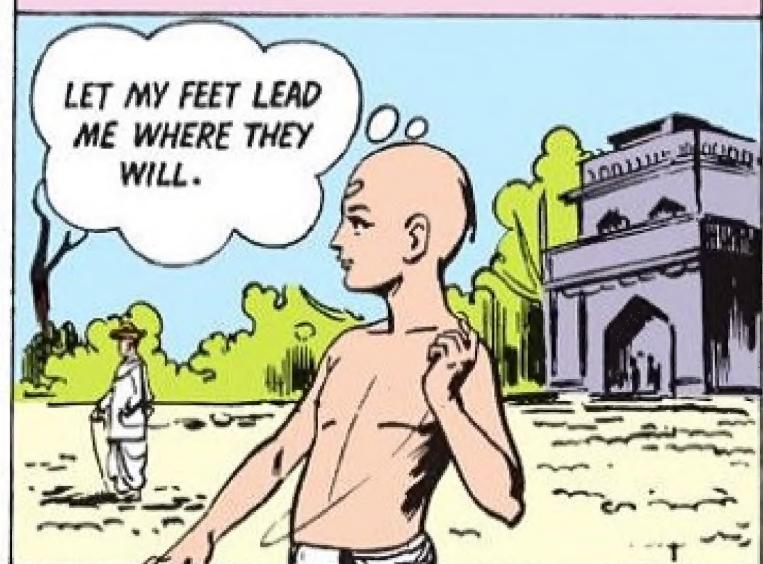
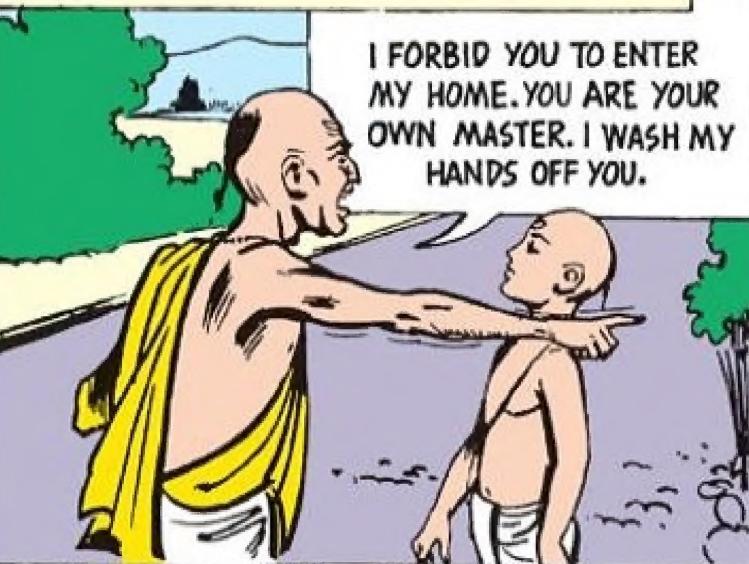


AS HE MADE HIS WAY OUT OF THE CROWDS,
HIS UNCLE FOLLOWED HIM.

RAM WAS COMPLETELY AT PEACE WITH HIMSELF
AND UTTERLY CONFIDENT.

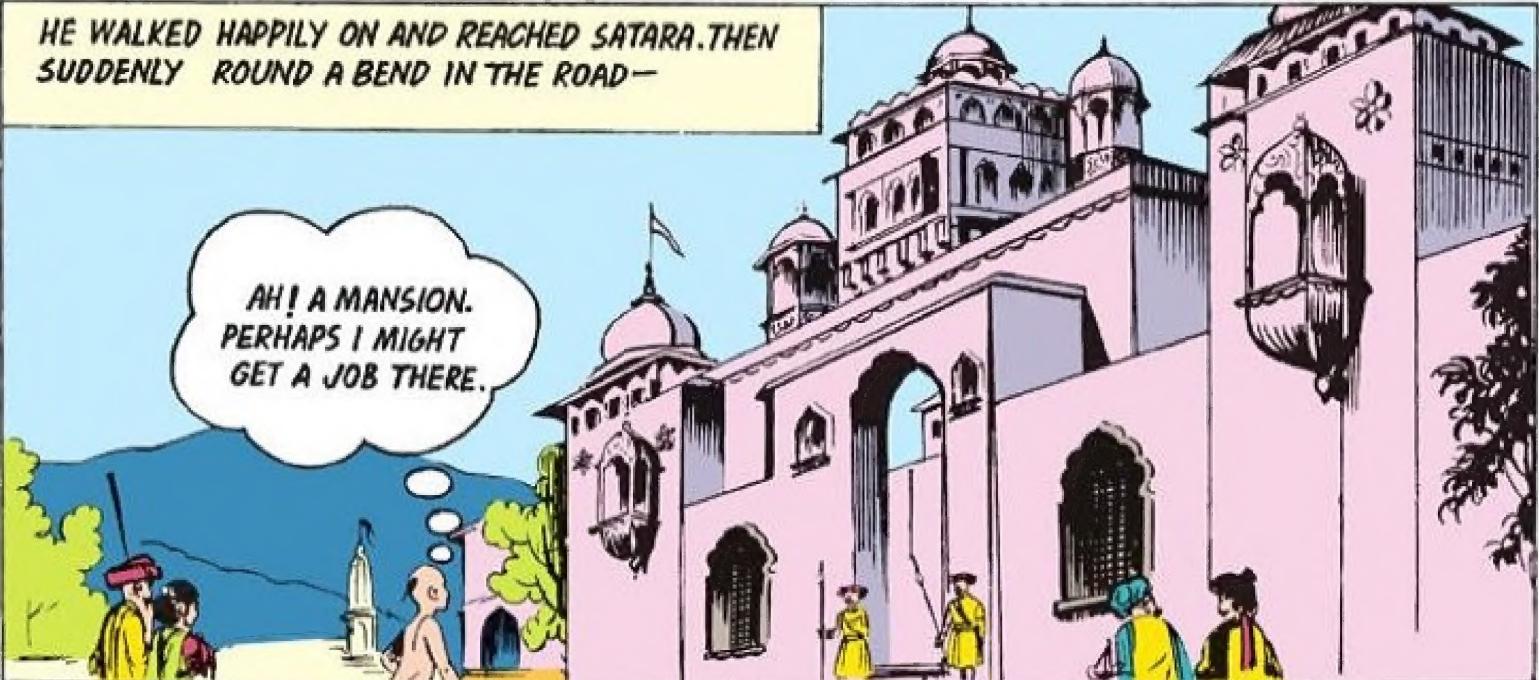
I FORBID YOU TO ENTER
MY HOME. YOU ARE YOUR
OWN MASTER. I WASH MY
HANDS OFF YOU.

LET MY FEET LEAD
ME WHERE THEY
WILL.



HE WALKED HAPPILY ON AND REACHED SATARA. THEN
SUDDENLY ROUND A BEND IN THE ROAD—

AH! A MANSION.
PERHAPS I MIGHT
GET A JOB THERE.



AT THAT MOMENT A PUJARI CAME OUT.

WHO LIVES HERE?

ANAGAL SAHEB.
WHAT DO YOU
WANT?

I NEED A JOB.
DO YOU THINK
HE WOULD EMPLOY
ME?

COME WITH ME.
I HAVE FINISHED MY
DAILY PUJA. I AM
FREE.

AND THE PUJARI LED RAM TO ANAGAL SAHEB.

THERE IS ANAGAL SAHEB.
PAY YOUR RESPECTS TO HIM.
HE IS A KIND MAN. IF YOU ARE
LUCKY YOU WILL GET WHAT
YOU WANT.

WHO ARE YOU? WHERE DO YOU
COME FROM? WHAT DO YOU
WANT?

I AM A POOR
BRAHMAN LAD
FROM MAHULI, IN
NEED OF A JOB.

WE NEED A BRAHMAN
MENIAL. CAN YOU DO
THE WORK?

OH! YES! AND
GRATEFULLY!

YOU WILL HAVE TO WASH CLOTHES, DRAW WATER, RUN ERRANDS...



THEN YOU MAY START WORK TODAY. AFTER A WEEK WE WILL DECIDE WHAT TO PAY YOU.



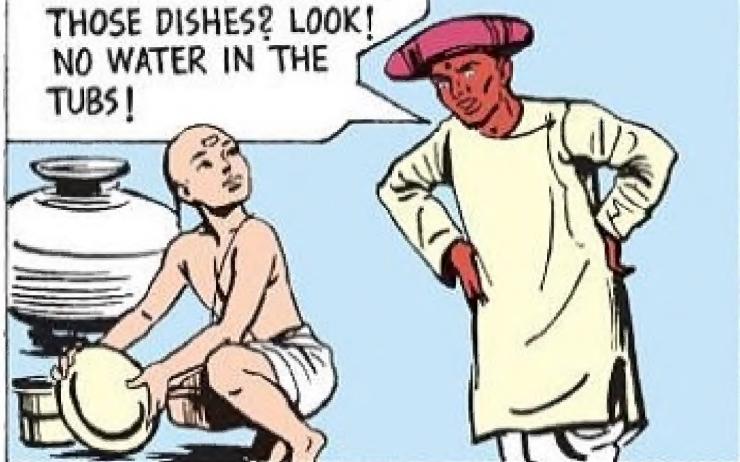
ANAGAL CALLED FOR THE CHIEF MENIAL.

TAKE HIM TO YOUR MISTRESS AND ASK HER TO ASSIGN HIM HIS DUTIES.



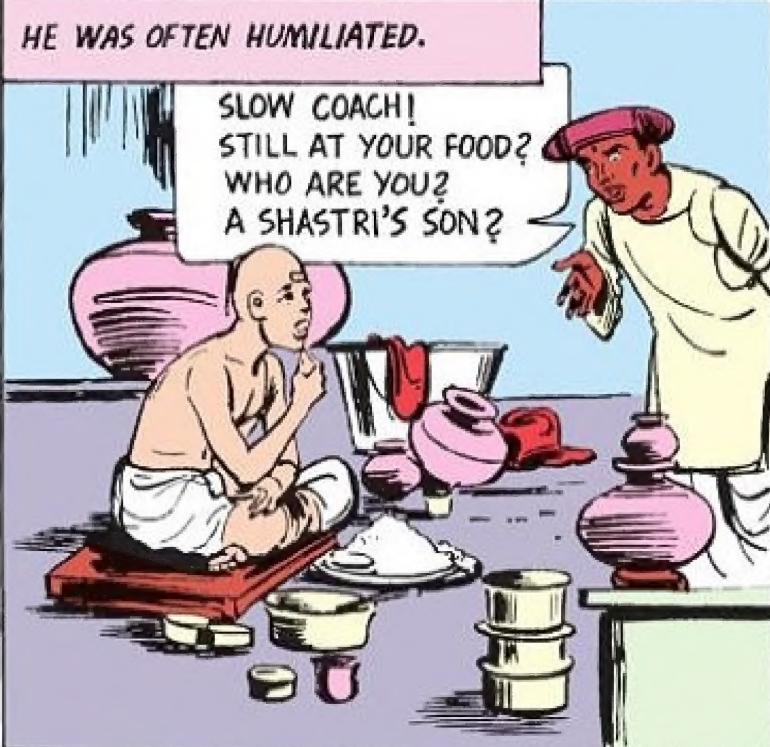
AND RAM'S ORDEALS BEGAN.

O RAMYAI! HURRY! HAVEN'T YOU FINISHED THOSE DISHES? LOOK! NO WATER IN THE TUBS!



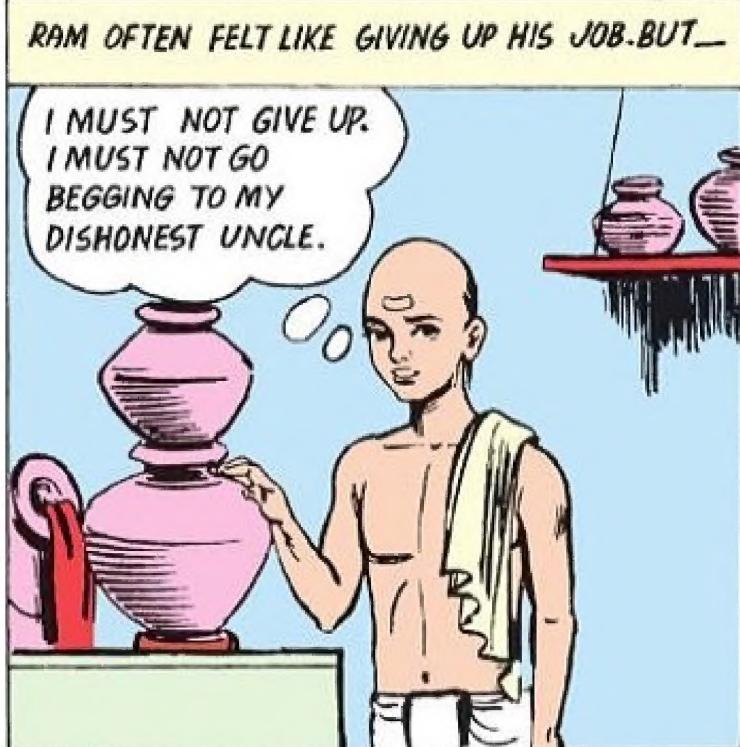
HE WAS OFTEN HUMILIATED.

SLOW COACH! STILL AT YOUR FOOD? WHO ARE YOU? A SHASTRI'S SON?



RAM OFTEN FELT LIKE GIVING UP HIS JOB. BUT...

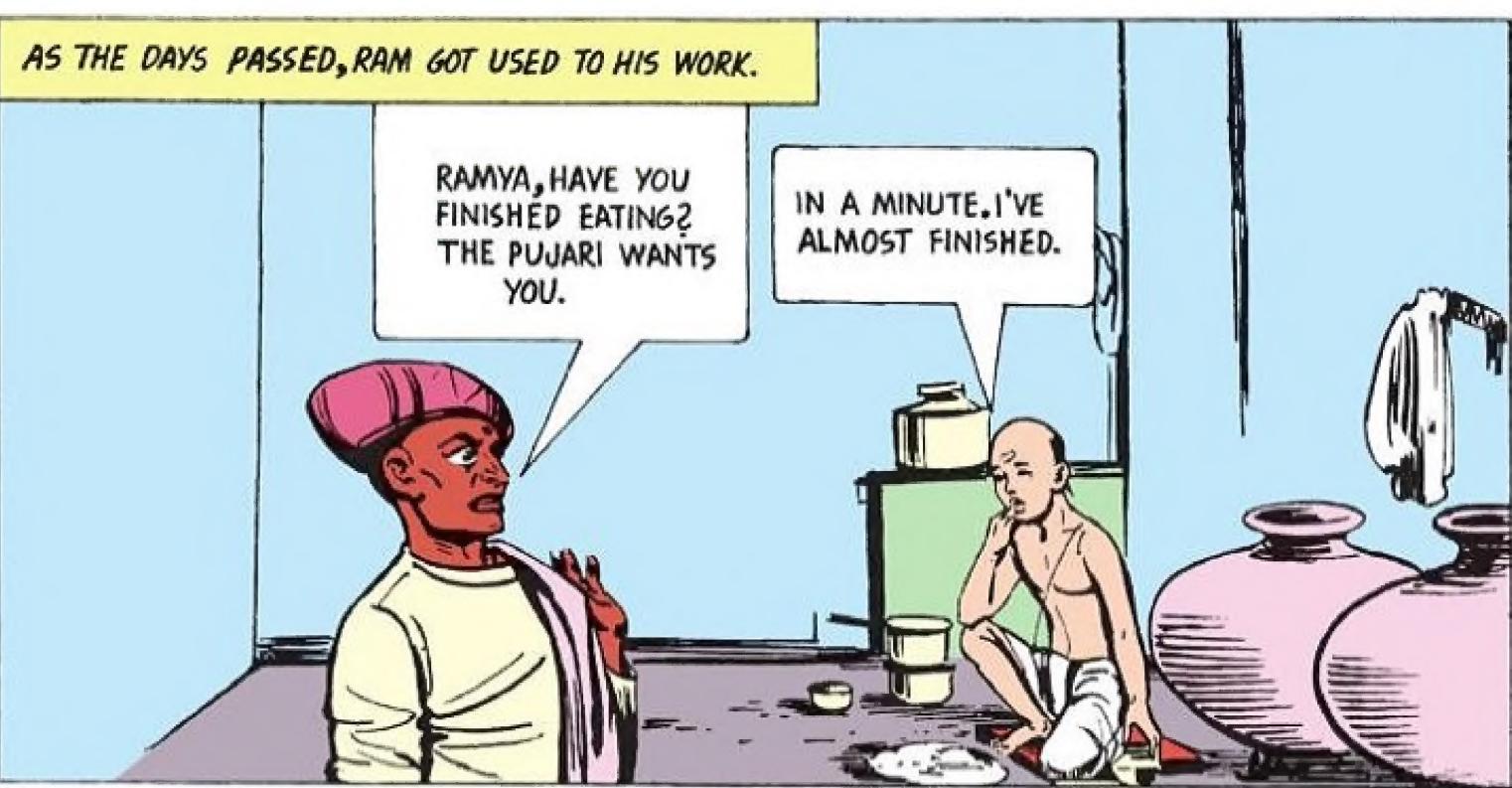
I MUST NOT GIVE UP.
I MUST NOT GO BEGGING TO MY DISHONEST UNCLE.



AS THE DAYS PASSED, RAM GOT USED TO HIS WORK.

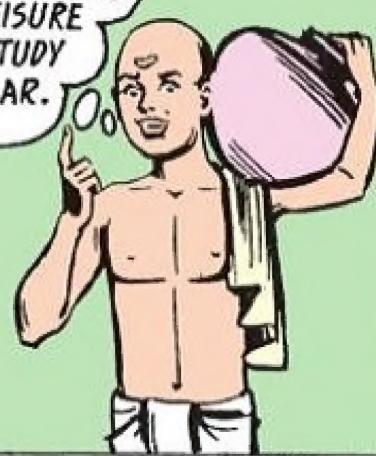
RAMYA, HAVE YOU FINISHED EATING? THE PUJARI WANTS YOU.

IN A MINUTE. I'VE ALMOST FINISHED.



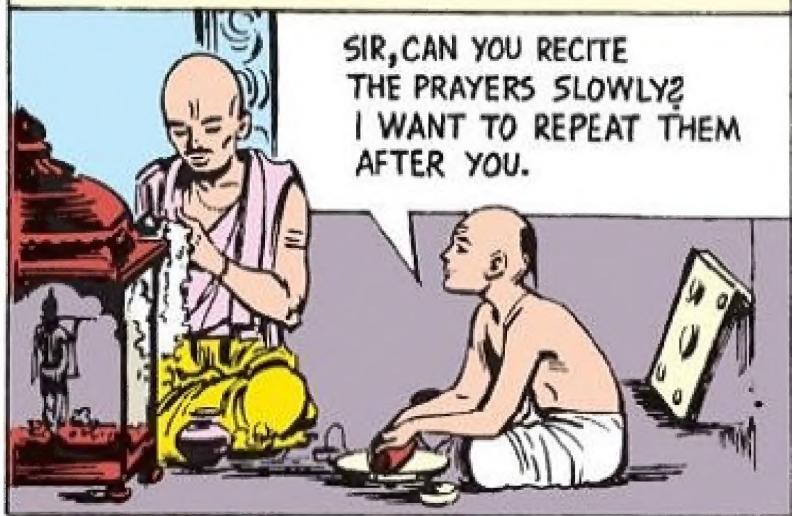
ONE DAY A THOUGHT SUDDENLY STRUCK HIM—

IF I BECOME A PUJARI,
I WILL HAVE LEISURE
ENOUGH TO STUDY
TO BE A SCHOLAR.



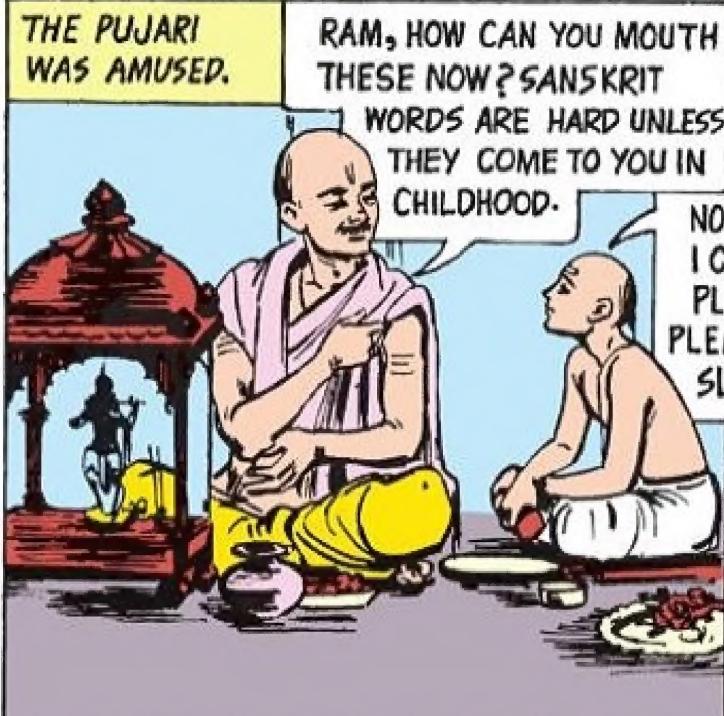
THAT DAY AS HE WAS ASSISTING THE PUJARI—

SIR, CAN YOU RECITE
THE PRAYERS SLOWLY?
I WANT TO REPEAT THEM
AFTER YOU.



THE PUJARI
WAS AMUSED.

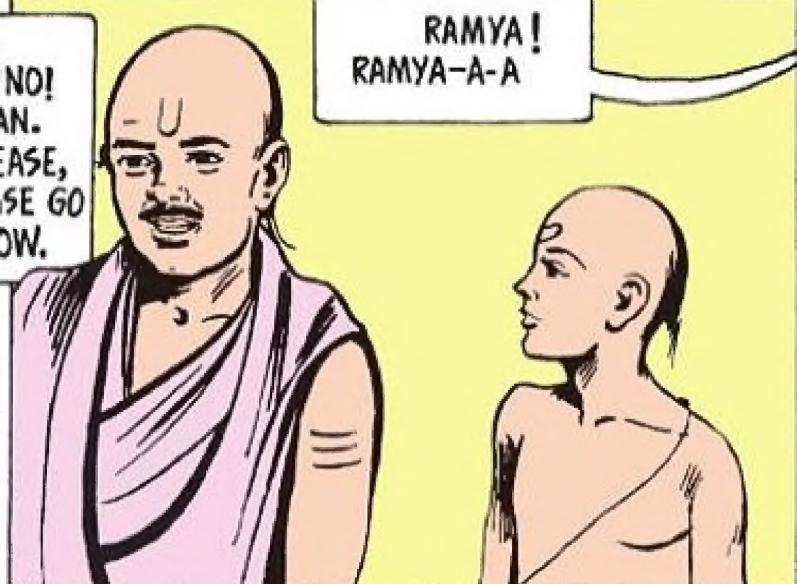
RAM, HOW CAN YOU MOUTH
THESE NOW? SANSKRIT
WORDS ARE HARD UNLESS
THEY COME TO YOU IN
CHILDHOOD.



THE PUJARI SMILED AND BEGAN RECITING THE
PRAYERS AT A SLOWER PACE. JUST THEN—

NO! NO!
I CAN.
PLEASE,
PLEASE GO
SLOW.

RAMYA!
RAMYA-A-A



THE NEXT MOMENT THE CHIEF MENIAL CHARGED INTO THE ROOM.

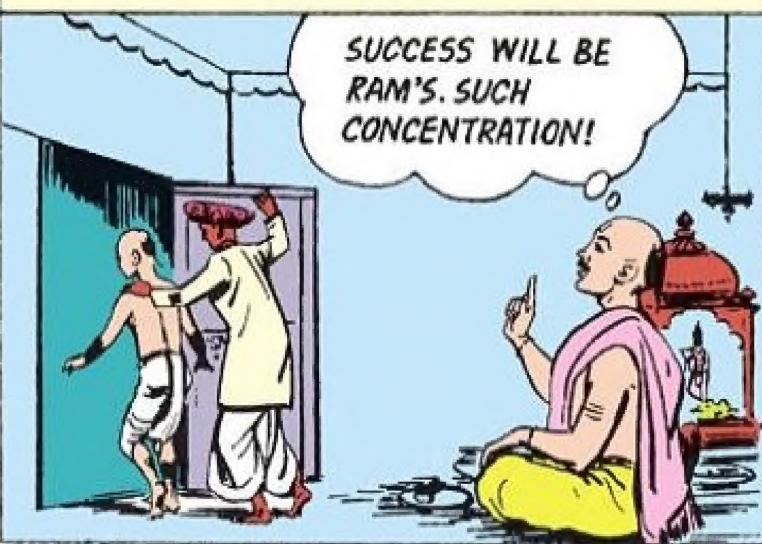
COULDN'T YOU HEAR ME? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU SHOULD HAVE COME DOWN AN HOUR AGO.

TCH! TCH!



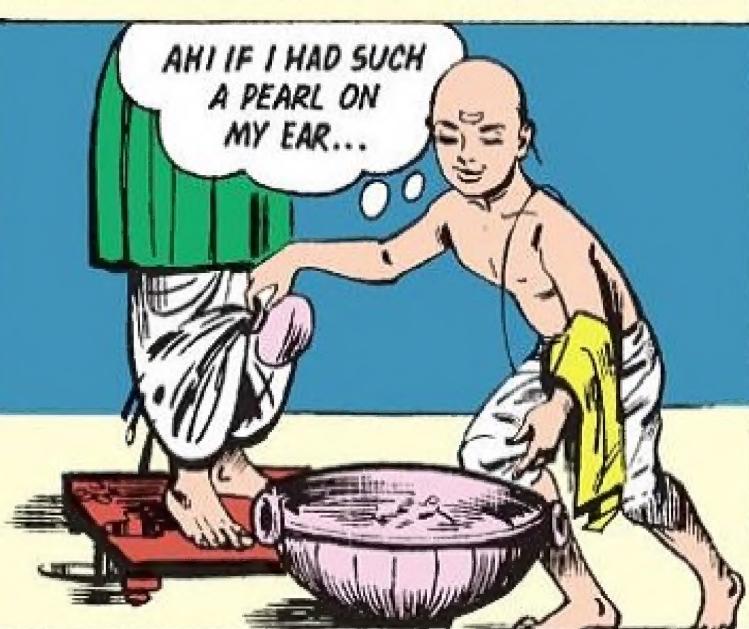
AND PUSHING RAM IN FRONT OF HIM, THE CHIEF MENIAL LEFT THE ROOM.

SUCCESS WILL BE RAM'S. SUCH CONCENTRATION!



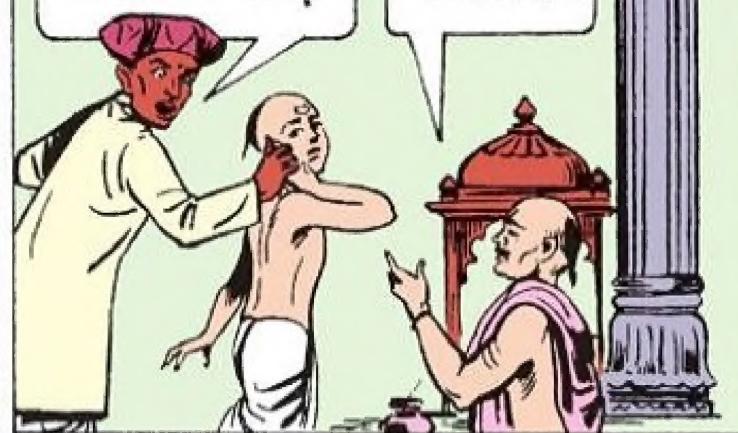
ANAGAL PLACED HIS FEET ON THE PLATFORM.

AH! IF I HAD SUCH A PEARL ON MY EAR...



ANAGAL SAHEB IS EXPECTED ANY MOMENT. WHERE IS THE WATER TO WASH HIS FEET?

GO, RAM! WE WILL CONTINUE TOMORROW.



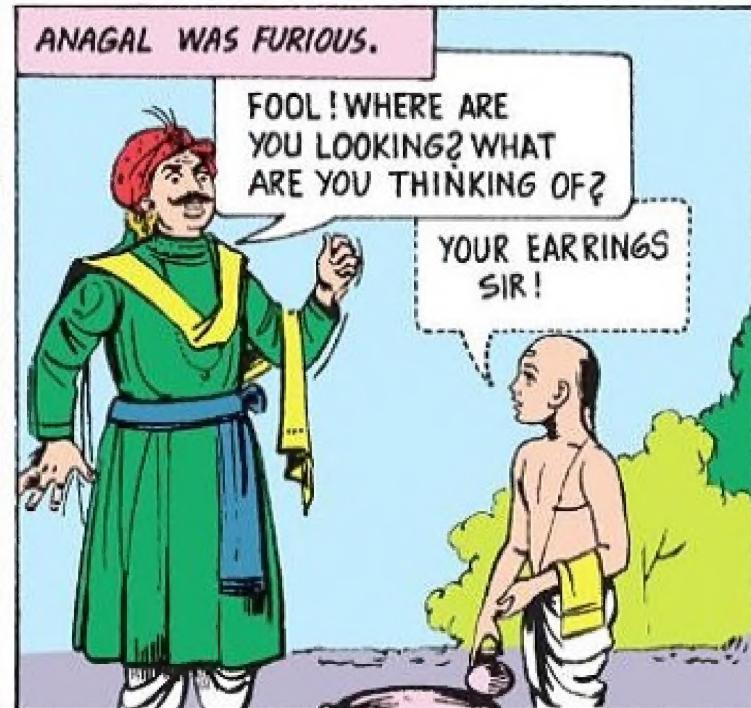
RAM WAS READY WITH THE WATER WHEN ANAGAL ARRIVED.



ANAGAL WAS FURIOUS.

FOOL! WHERE ARE YOU LOOKING? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF?

YOUR EARRINGS SIR!



WHY! DO YOU FEEL
LIKE WEARING
SUCH EARRINGS?

YES! SIR!

YOU WILL FIRST
HAVE TO BECOME
WORTHY OF THEM.

I SHALL!

HA! HA! HA!
AS MY MENIAL?

ANAGAL DID NOT MEAN TO HURT RAM
BUT RAM WAS TOUCHED TO THE QUICK.

I AM NO
LONGER YOUR
MENIAL.

UH?

RAM'S REPLY HAD AN UNEXPECTED EFFECT ON ANAGAL. HIS
VOICE BECAME GENTLE AND KIND.

THEN WHAT ARE
YOU GOING TO
DO?

I WILL GO TO VARANASI,
FIND A MASTER, LEARN AT HIS
FEET AND BECOME A
SHAstri. TILL THEN I WILL NOT
SET FOOT ON THIS LAND.

BEFORE ANAGAL COULD REPLY THE PUJARI CAME ON THE SCENE.

I AM CONFIDENT HE WILL.



ANAGAL REACHED INTO HIS CUMMERBUND AND PULLED OUT A BAG OF COINS.

THIS BOY IS NO ORDINARY MENIAL!

HERE I TAKE THIS WITH MY BLESSINGS. MAY YOU SUCCEED IN YOUR AMBITION.

AND THE PUJARI TOLD ANAGAL ABOUT RAM'S ATTEMPTS TO LEARN SHLOKAS AND HIS ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE.

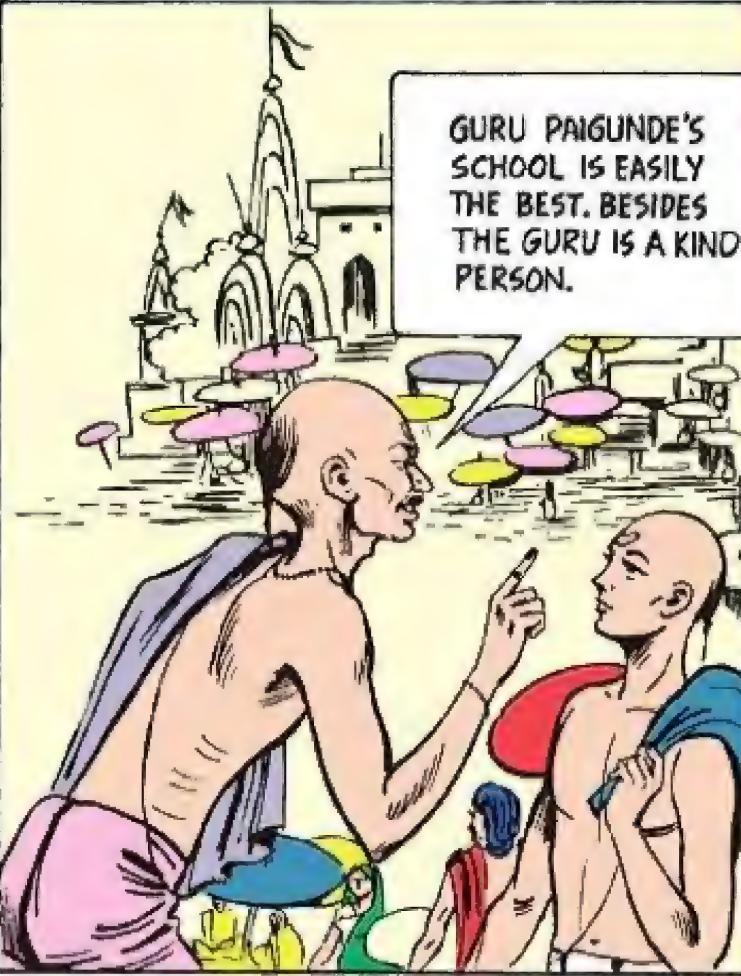


THE TREK TO VARANASI WAS A LONG AND ARDUOUS ONE FOR THE SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD RAM BUT HE FINALLY REACHED.

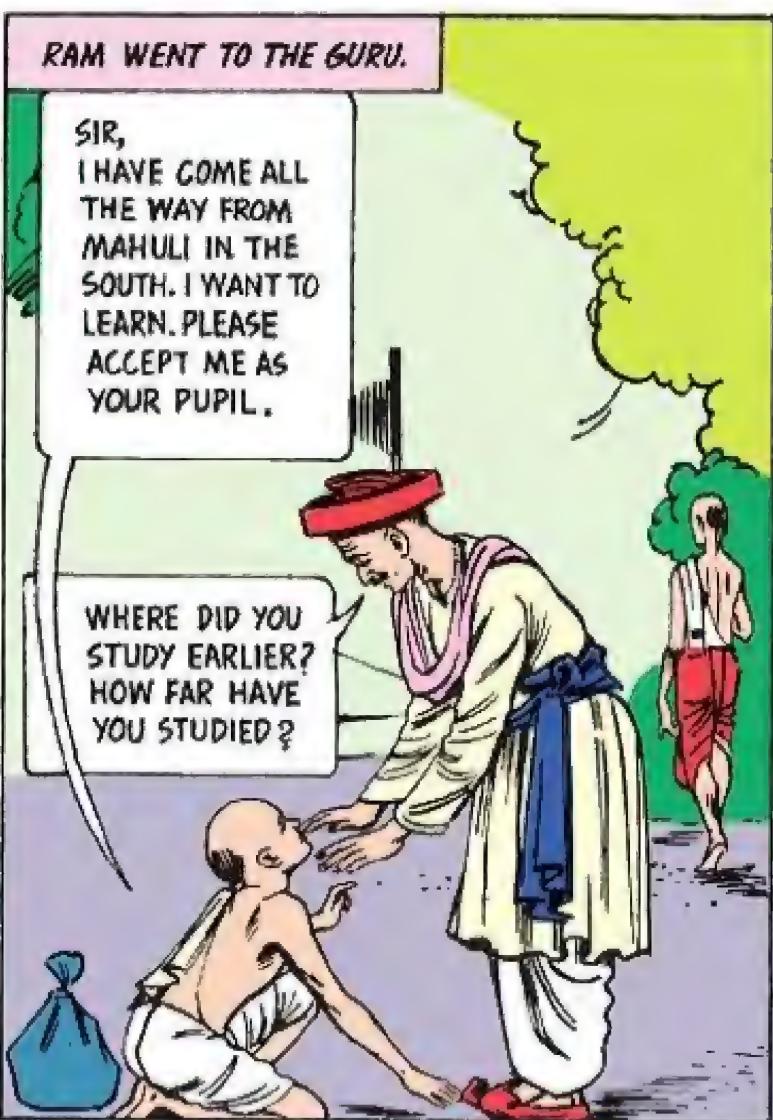
YOU HAVE GIVEN LEARNING AND WISDOM TO MILLIONS WHO HAVE COME TO YOU. I TOO HAVE COME TO YOUR FEET WITH THE HOPE OF ACQUIRING BOTH. DO NOT SPURN ME BUT GIVE ME THE PROTECTION OF A MOTHER.



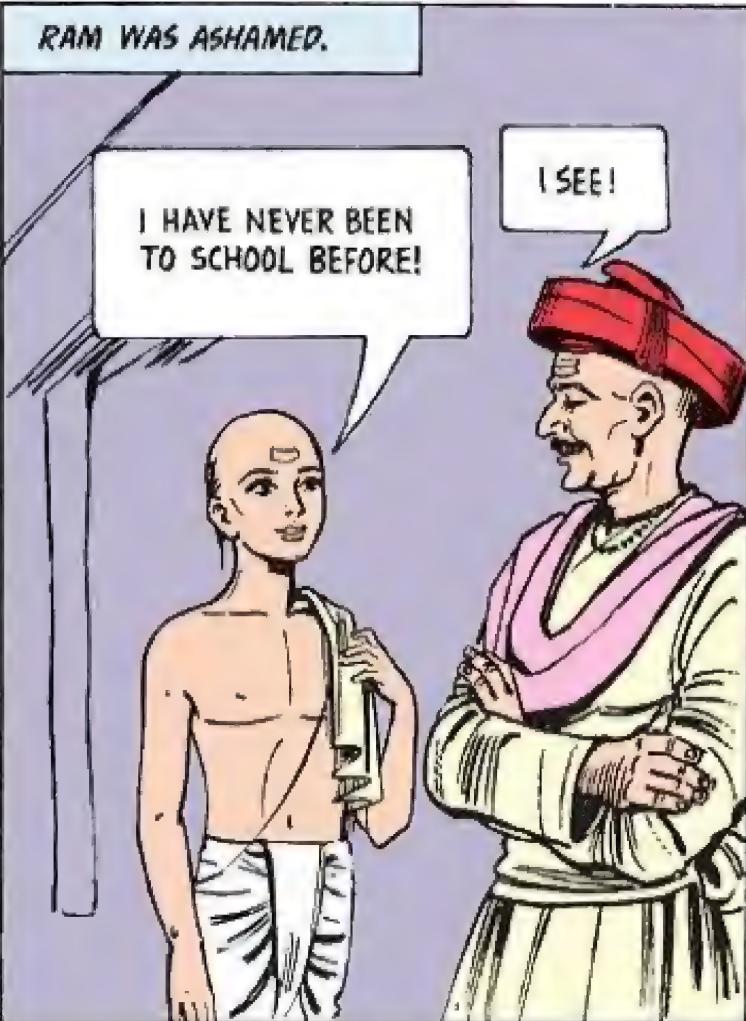
HE WENT AROUND MAKING ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE BEST SCHOOLS.



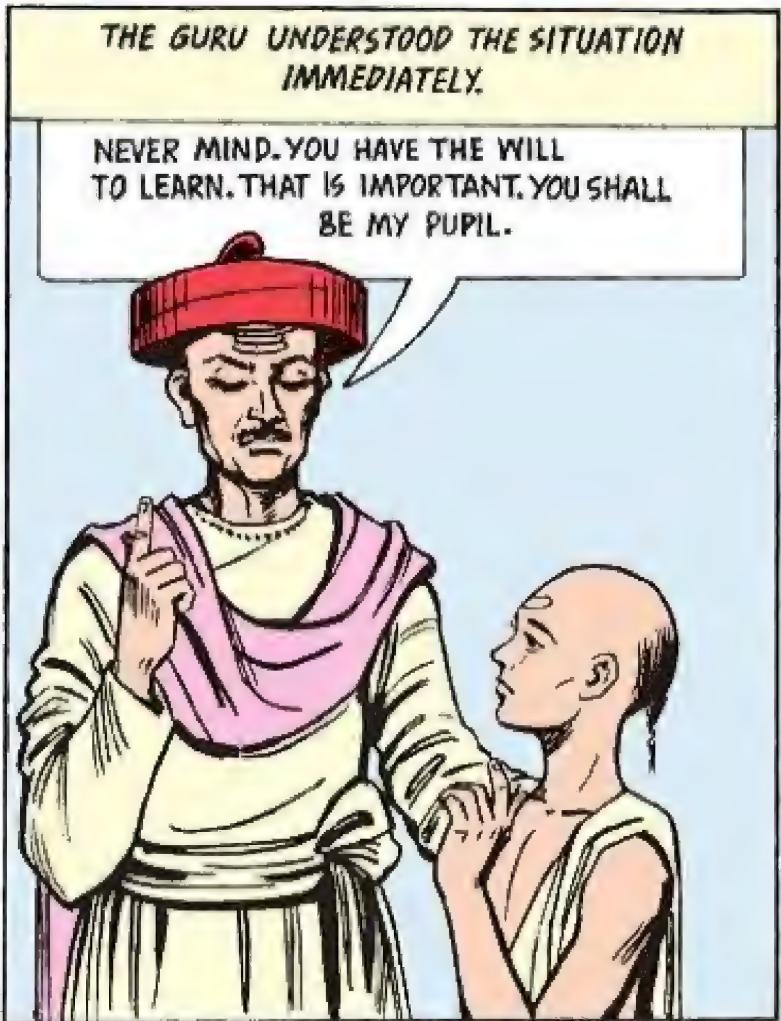
RAM WENT TO THE GURU.



RAM WAS ASHAMED.



THE GURU UNDERSTOOD THE SITUATION IMMEDIATELY.



I SHALL TEACH YOU FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. I SHALL TURN YOU INTO A SCHOLAR.

YOU SHALL HAVE NO CAUSE FOR REGRET, SIR.

RAM BEGAN HIS STUDIES. HE WAS A SINCERE PUPIL AND THE GURU NEVER ONCE HAD TO SCOLD HIM.

THAT'S WRONG. REPEAT IT AFTER ME.

HIS FELLOW STUDENTS OFTEN TEASING HIM BECAUSE HE WAS MUCH OLDER THAN MOST OF THEM.

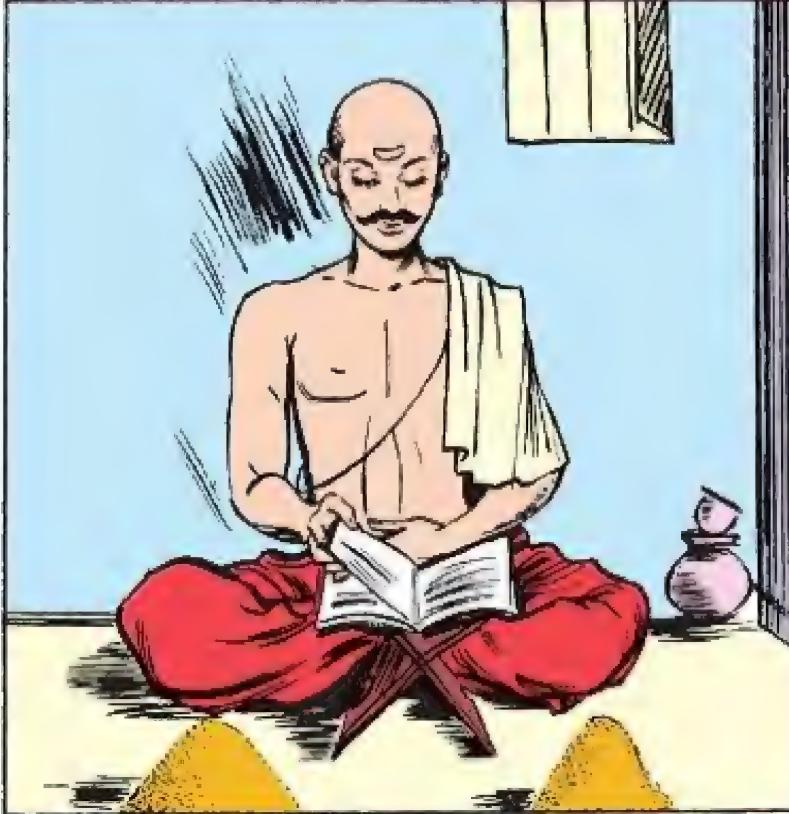
SEE RAM! WE TOO HAVE GROWN MOUSTACHES. HAI HAI

BUT RAM TOOK THE TEASING GOOD-HUMUREDLY AND SOON BECAME A FAVOURITE. ONE DAY—

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, RAM?

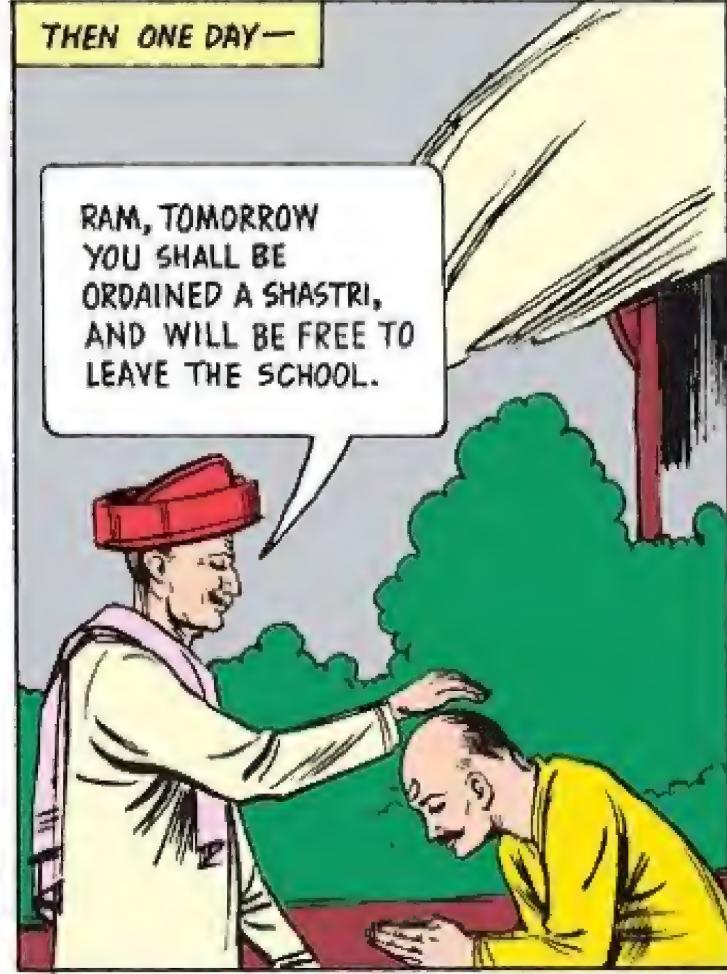
REPEATING MY SHLOKAS, AS MANY TIMES AS THE GRAINS OF WHEAT HERE. THAT IS THE ONLY WAY TO MASTER SANSKRIT AT MY AGE.

TWELVE YEARS PASSED IN THIS MANNER AND RAM EMERGED A MASTER IN THE VEDAS, VEDANGAS AND SHASTRAS.



THEN ONE DAY—

RAM, TOMORROW YOU SHALL BE ORDAINED A SHASTRI, AND WILL BE FREE TO LEAVE THE SCHOOL.



THE NEXT DAY—

SIR, YOU MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY. WHAT DAKSHINA CAN I OFFER YOU?

DON'T SELL YOUR KNOWLEDGE. THAT IS THE GREATEST DAKSHINA YOU COULD OFFER ME. LET JUSTICE, THE KING AND SOCIETY BENEFIT BY YOUR LEARNING.



AFTER THE CEREMONY WAS OVER RAM SHASTRI LEFT FOR MAHULI KSHETRA DETERMINED TO REPAY HIS GURU TO THE LAST.

AS SOON AS RAM SHASTRI ARRIVED AT MAHULI KSHETRA, PESHWA MADHAV RAO SENT FOR HIM.



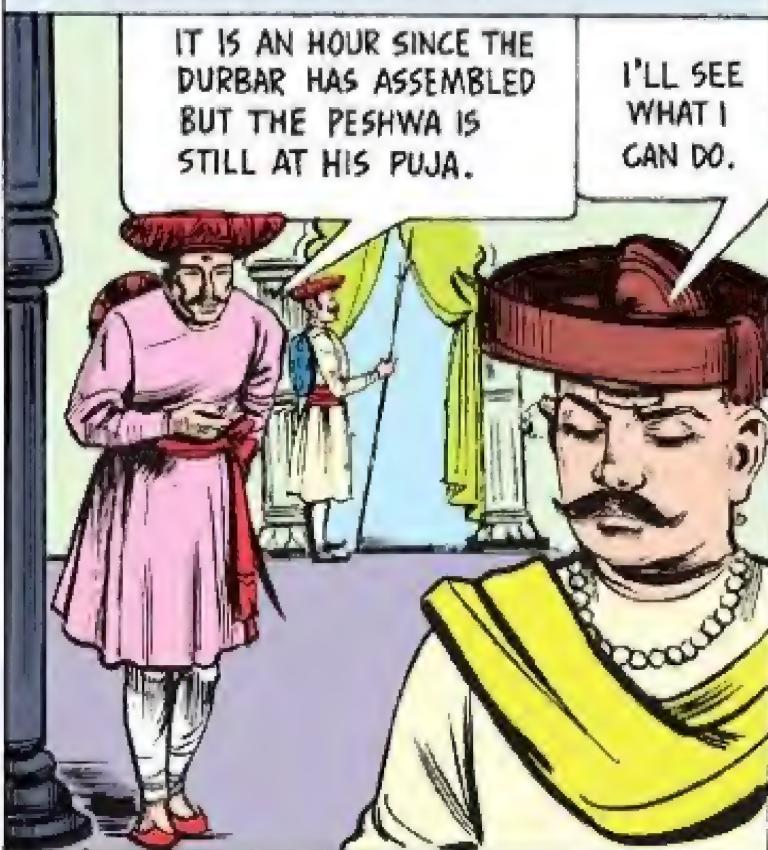
WHEN RAM SHASTRI CAME TO THE COURT AT POONA—



MADHAV RAO WAS A GOOD RULER. BUT A BRAHMAN BY BIRTH, HE SPENT FAR TOO MUCH TIME ON RELIGIOUS RITUALS, OFTEN IN PREFERENCE TO HIS STATE DUTIES.

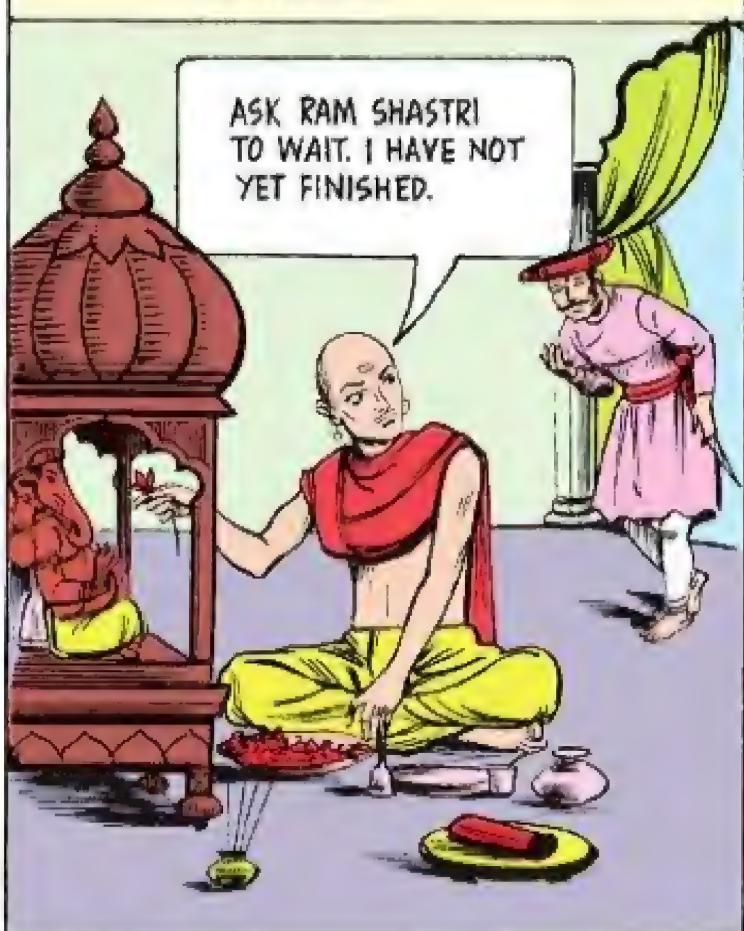
IT IS AN HOUR SINCE THE DURBAR HAS ASSEMBLED BUT THE PESHWA IS STILL AT HIS PUJA.

I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.



RAM SHASTRI SENT A MESSAGE TO THE PESHWA. BUT—

ASK RAM SHASTRI TO WAIT. I HAVE NOT YET FINISHED.



WHEN THE MESSENGER RETURNED
UNSUCCESSFUL—

THE RULER NEGLECTS
HIS DUTIES. BUT HOW
CAN I LET HIM KNOW
WITHOUT OFFENDING
HIM?



THEN HE HAD AN IDEA. AS SOON AS THE PESHWA
EMERGED FROM THE PUJA ROOM —

I AM RESIGNING,
MY LORD. I AM
LEAVING FOR
KASHI.

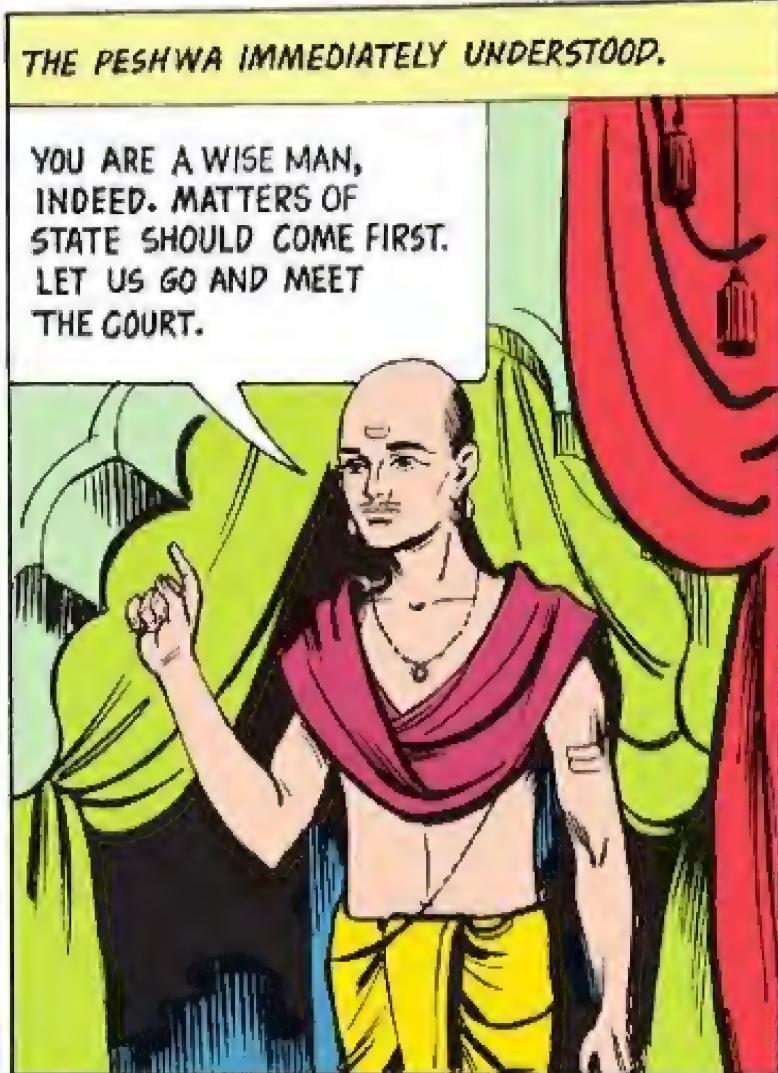
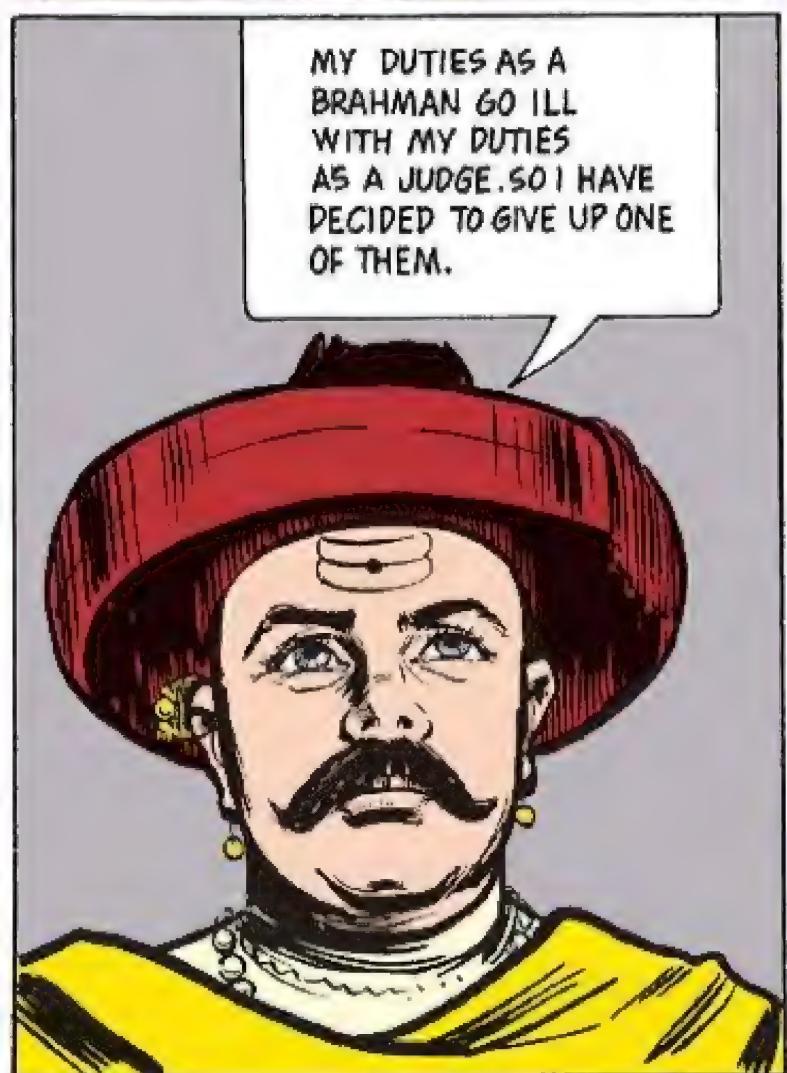
WHATEVER
FOR?



MY DUTIES AS A
BRAHMAN GO ILL
WITH MY DUTIES
AS A JUDGE. SO I HAVE
DECIDED TO GIVE UP ONE
OF THEM.

THE PESHWA IMMEDIATELY UNDERSTOOD.

YOU ARE A WISE MAN,
INDEED. MATTERS OF
STATE SHOULD COME FIRST.
LET US GO AND MEET
THE COURT.



MADHAV RAO'S CONFIDENCE IN RAM SHASTRI STEADILY GREW. WHEN THE CHIEF JUSTICE DIED, RAM SHASTRI WAS GIVEN THE APPOINTMENT.

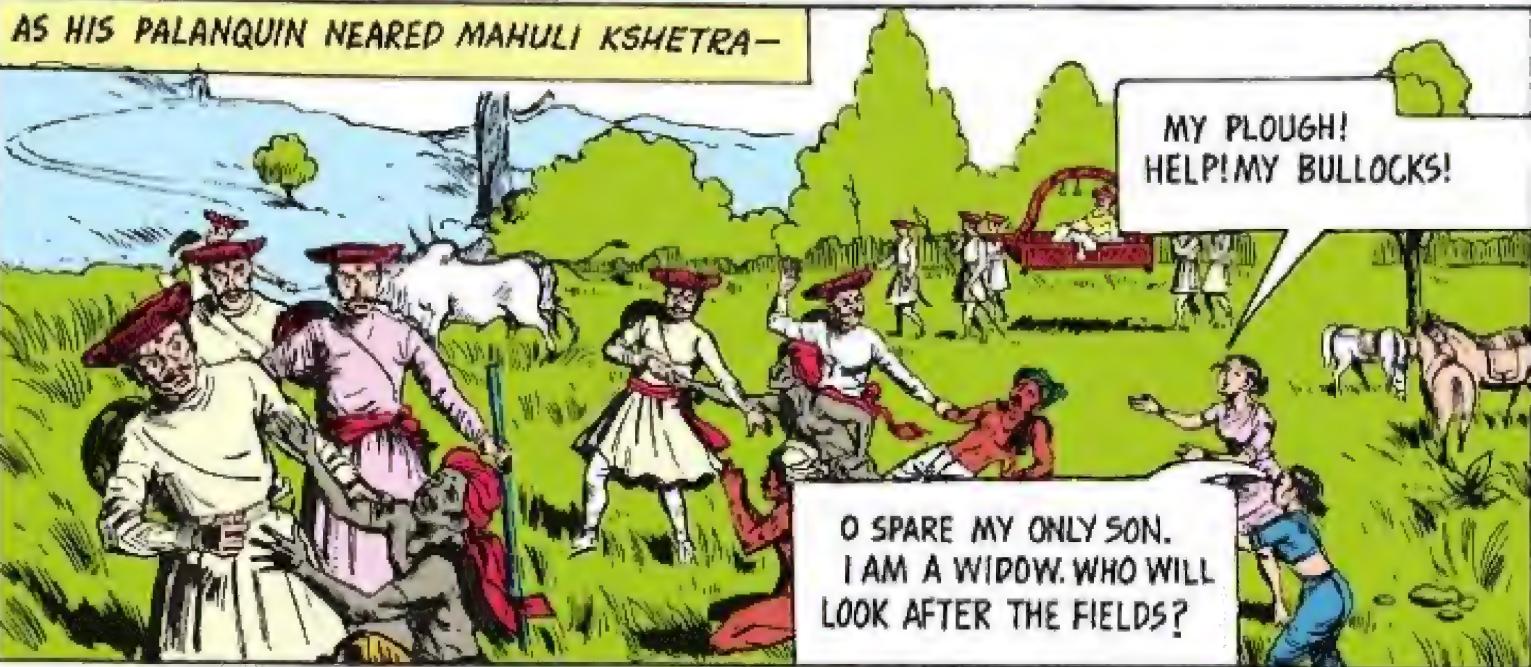


A FEW MONTHS LATER-

IT IS THE HARVEST SEASON. I SHALL VISIT MAHULI FOR A FEW DAYS.



AS HIS PALANQUIN NEARED MAHULI KSHETRA-



RAM SHASTRI STEPPED OUT OF HIS PALANQUIN.



RAM SHASTRI GLANCED TOWARDS THE FIELDS.

COME ON!

I WON'T.

THEN I'LL HAVE
TO TAKE YOU BY
FORCE!



RAM SHASTRI WAS FURIOUS.

QUICK! FOLLOW ME!



WE ARE UP TO NOTHING.
THE PESHWA NEEDS FIFTY
LABOURERS URGENTLY. WE
ARE COLLECTING THEM.

RELEASE THE FARMERS. I WILL
TALK TO THE PESHWA.



THE FARMERS, CONFIDENT OF RAM SHASTRI'S PROTECTION, REFUSED TO MOVE.

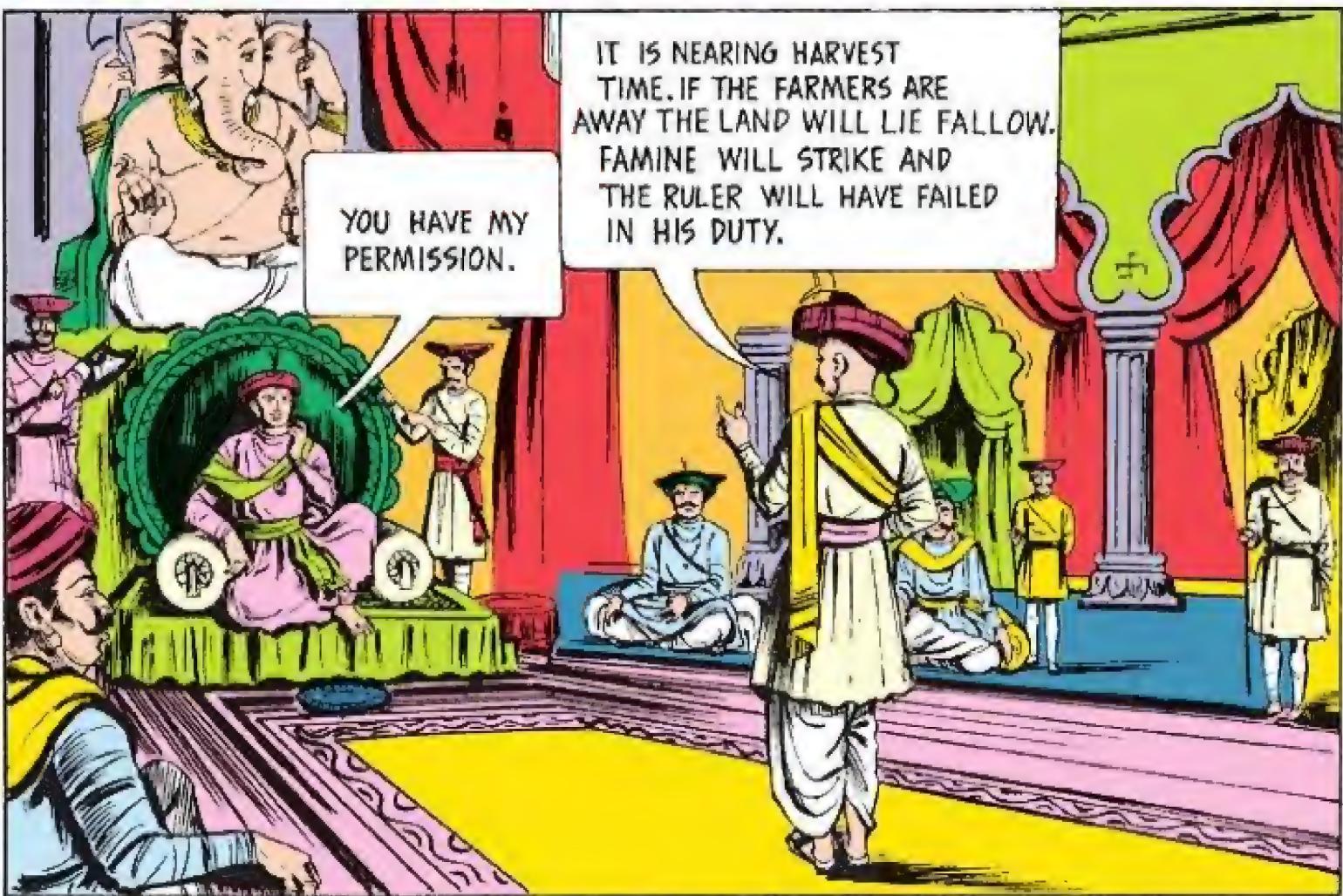
RIGHT. WE SHALL
NOT COME.

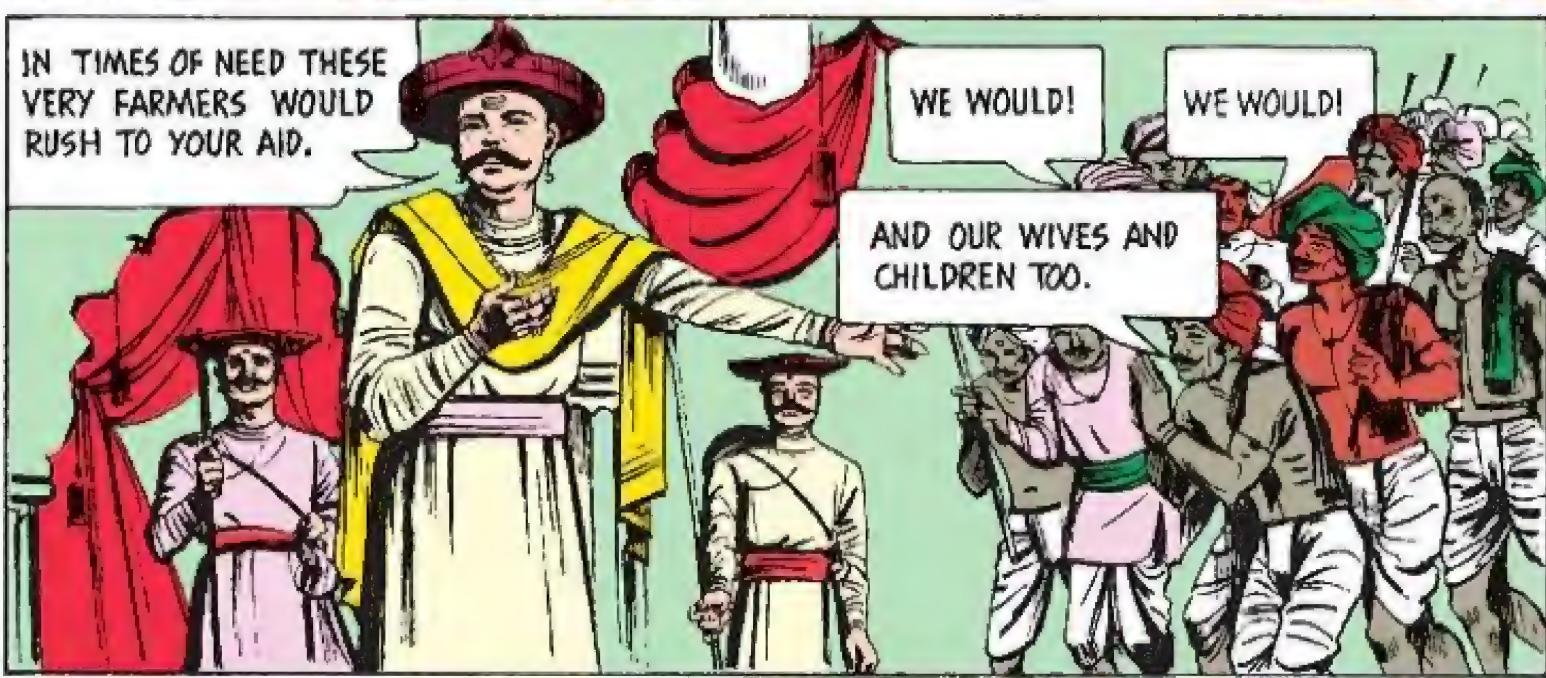
WE ARE CARRYING OUT THE ORDERS
OF OUR SUBEDAR. IF THEY DON'T
COME WE'LL HAVE TO ARREST THEM.

BY ALL MEANS, DO!
I SHALL PLEAD THE
FARMERS' CASE WITH
THE PESHWA.

THE SOLDIERS ARRESTED THE
FARMERS AND LED THEM TO THE PESHWA.

THE PESHWA WAS SURPRISED WHEN HE HEARD THE CHARGES AGAINST RAM SHASTRI.



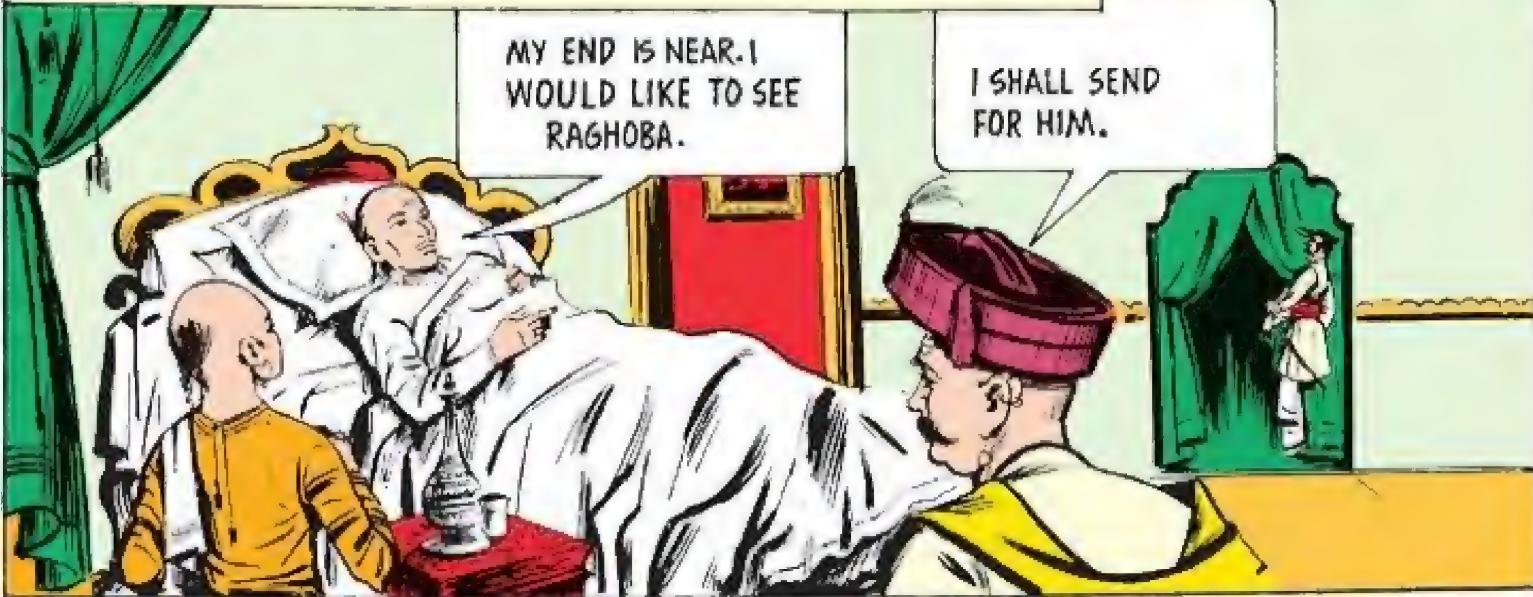


THE PESHWA PARDONED THE FARMERS AND SENT THEM BACK TO THEIR FIELDS. RAM SHASTRI'S NAME BECAME A BYWORD FOR JUSTICE AND HIS FAME SPREAD OVER THE ENTIRE MARATHA KINGDOM.

ONE DAY MADHAV RAO'S DECLINING HEALTH TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE. HIS BROTHER NARAYAN RAO AND RAM SHASTRI WERE AT HIS BEDSIDE.

MY END IS NEAR. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE RAGHOBIA.

I SHALL SEND FOR HIM.



RAGHOBIA, ALSO KNOWN AS RAGHUNATH RAO, WAS THE PESHWA'S UNCLE. MADHAV RAO HAD TO PLACE HIM UNDER HOUSE ARREST BECAUSE HE AND HIS AMBITIOUS WIFE ANANDI WERE FOREVER PLOTTING AGAINST HIM.

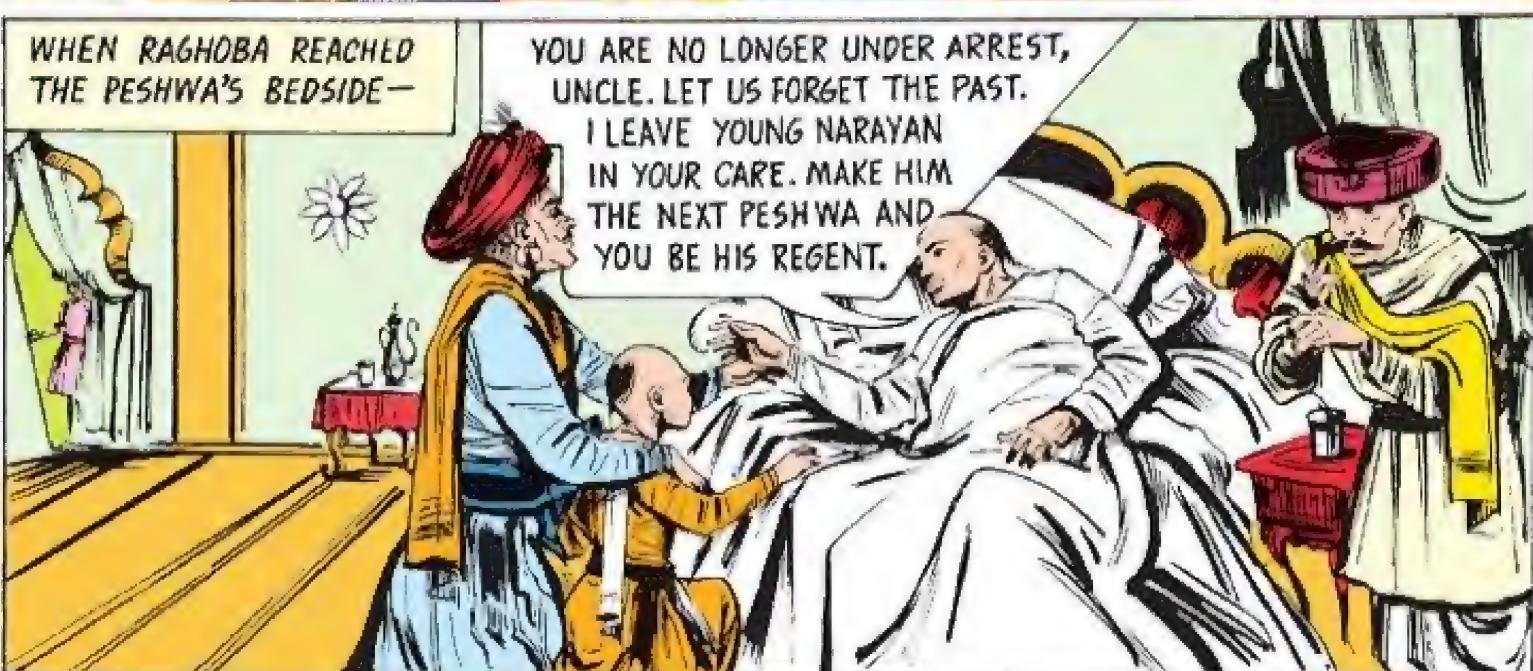
THE PESHWA WANTS TO SEE YOU!



WHEN RAGHOBIA REACHED THE PESHWA'S BEDSIDE—

YOU ARE NO LONGER UNDER ARREST, UNCLE. LET US FORGET THE PAST.

I LEAVE YOUNG NARAYAN IN YOUR CARE. MAKE HIM THE NEXT PESHWA AND YOU BE HIS REGENT.



RAGHOBÄ WAS DELIGHTED. HE CAME BACK TO ANANDI, JUBILANT.

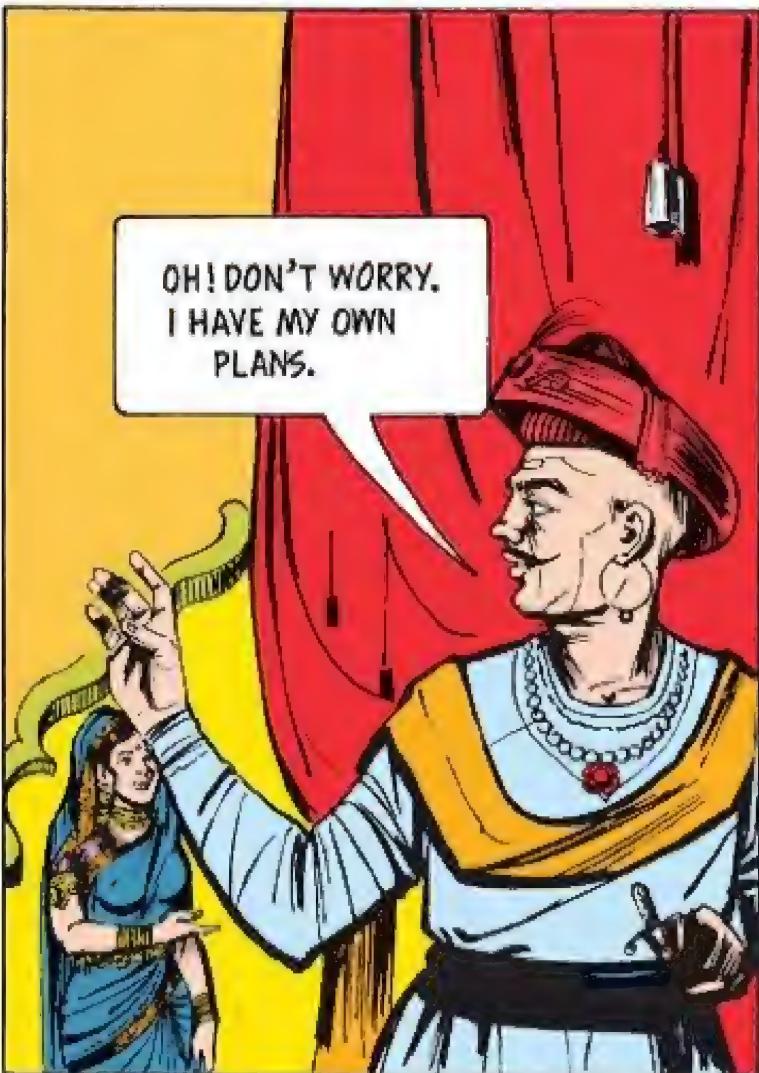
I HAVE GOOD NEWS! WE ARE FREE.
MADHAV RAO IS ABOUT TO DIE.
NARAYAN WILL BECOME THE TITULAR
PESHWA AND ALL THE POWER—
IN MY HANDS!



THE THRONE MAKES A PESHWA, NOT POWER.
NOW YOU DO THE DIRTY WORK SO THAT NARAYAN CAN ENJOY THE THRONE.



OH! DON'T WORRY.
I HAVE MY OWN PLANS.



A FEW DAYS LATER RAGHOBÄ CALLED ANANDIBAI TO HIM.

HERE! READ THIS
AND YOU'LL UNDERSTAND ALL.



IT WAS TO ONE OF HIS SOLDIERS.

...AS AGREED BY US
YOU WILL KIDNAP
NARAYAN RAO. YOU
WILL BE PAID...

KIDNAP
INDEED!
KILL SHOULD
BE THE WORD.

THERE IS NO LIGHT
HERE. I'LL GO OUT
AND READ IT.

ANANDIBAI SOON RETURNED WITH
THE LETTER.

EXCELLENT! WHY DON'T
YOU PUT YOUR SEAL ON IT.
I CAN DISPATCH IT RIGHT
AWAY.

AS SOON AS RAGHOBA'S SOLDIER
GOT THE LETTER—

RAGHOBA HAD TALKED
OF KIDNAPPING...
HE SEEMS TO HAVE CHANGED
HIS MIND. WELL IT'S NONE
OF MY BUSINESS. COME MY
MEN, LET'S GO.

RAGHOBA HAD NO IDEA THAT HE HAD
PUT HIS SEAL ON A DEATH WARRANT.

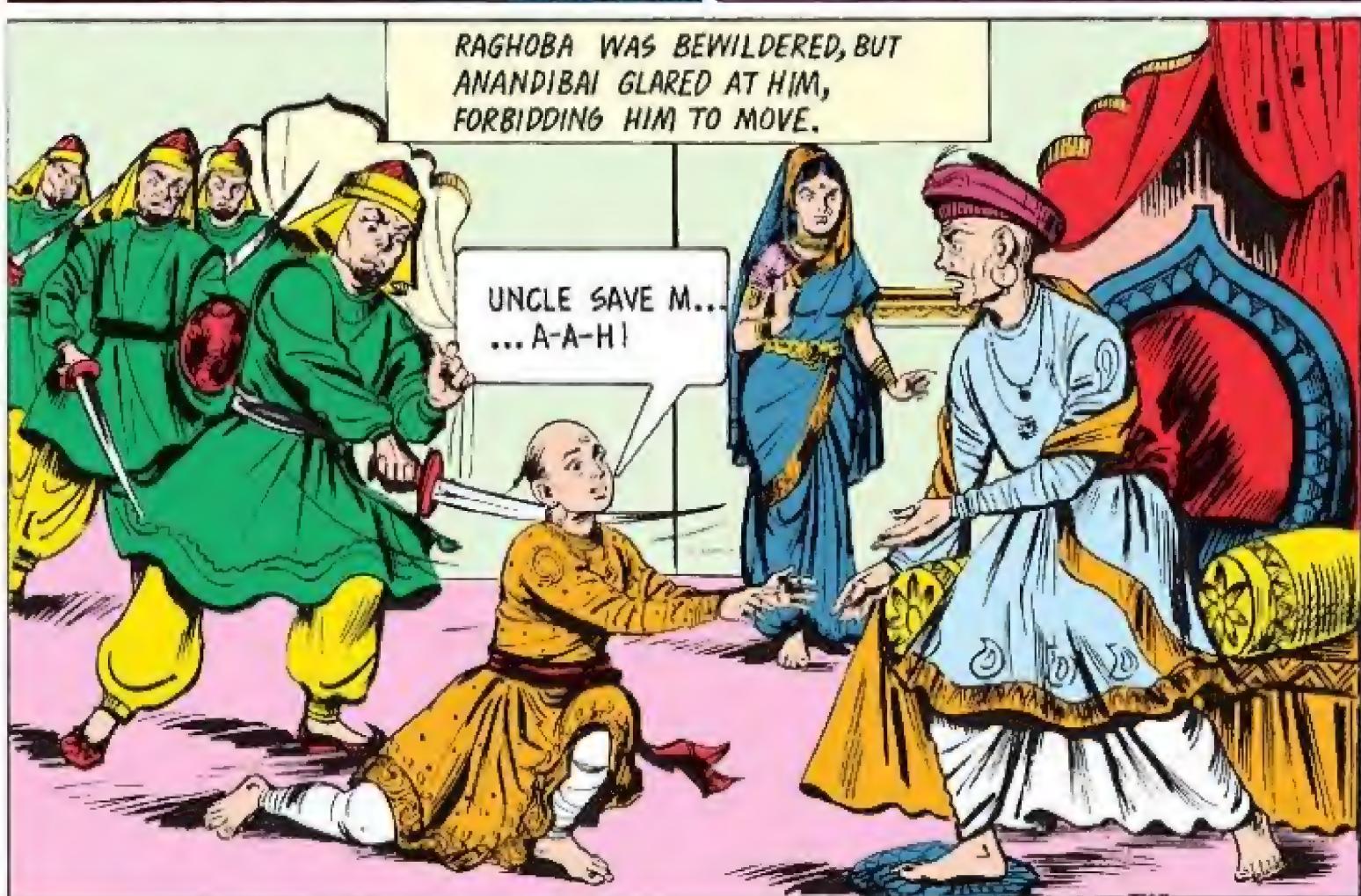
HE AND HIS MEN CHARGED INTO NARAYAN RAO'S ROOM—



NARAYAN RAN TO RAGHOBÄ.



RAGHOBÄ WAS BEWILDERED, BUT ANANDIBAI GLARED AT HIM, FORBIDDING HIM TO MOVE.



WHEN RAM SHASTRI LEARNT OF THE MURDER OF NARAYAN RAO IN BROAD DAYLIGHT, HE WAS AGHAST. HE PACED UP AND DOWN HIS ROOM.

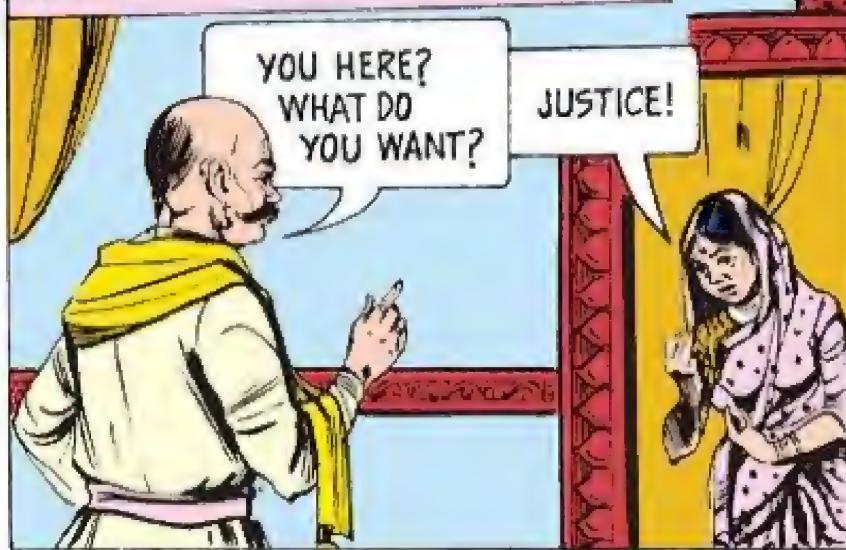


SUDDENLY A COMMOTION ON THE STREET DISTRACTED HIM. HE LOOKED OUT OF THE WINDOW. RAGHOBAB WAS GOING IN PROCESSION TO THE DURBAR.



UTTERLY DISGUSTED BY THE SIGHT, HE TURNED ROUND...

...TO FIND THE WIFE OF THE PESHWA'S BODYGUARD WAITING PATIENTLY FOR HIS ATTENTION.



BUT WHO WILL DARE TO...

I WILL. IT IS - IT IS...

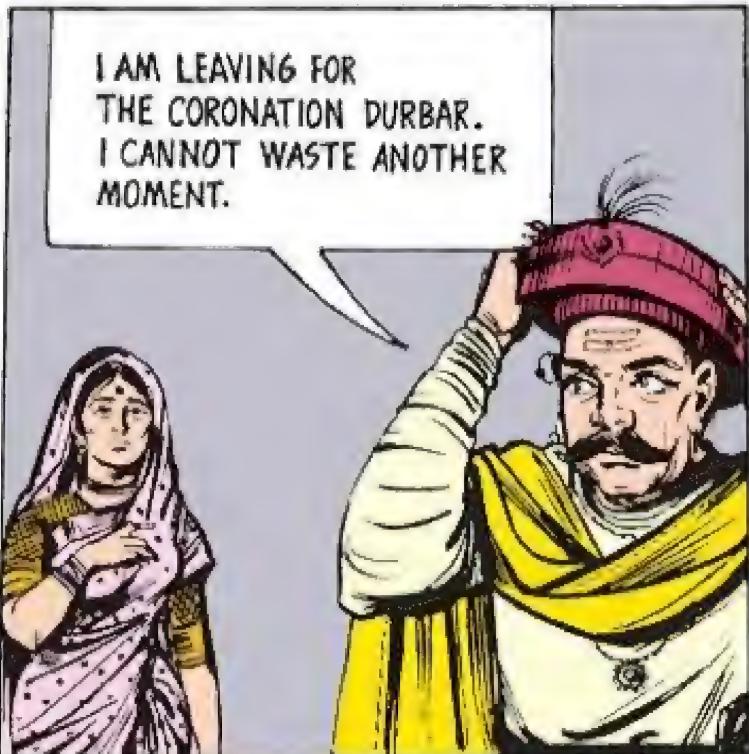
... RAGHUNATH RAO !



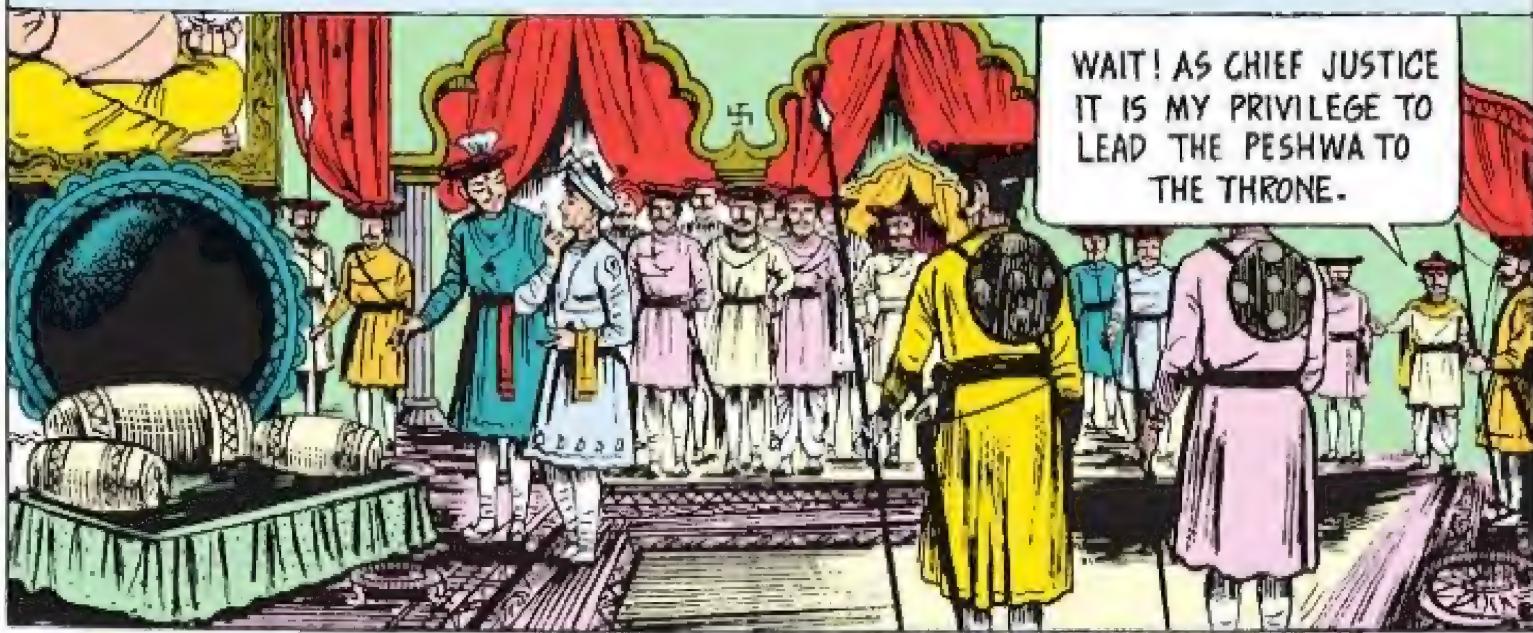
WHAT! HIS OWN UNCLE?
IMPOSSIBLE!
IT IS DANGEROUS TO SPREAD RUMOURS.

I HAVE PROOF. HERE IS THE LETTER. MY HUSBAND TOOK IT FROM RAGHOBA'S SOLDIERS— ALMOST KILLING HIMSELF IN THE SCUFFLE.





AT THE DURBAR HALL, RAGHUNATH RAO WAS ABOUT TO BE LED TO THE THRONE WHEN-



THE PESHWA WAS RELIEVED TO SEE RAM SHASTRI AT THE DURBAR.
HE HAD NOT EXPECTED HIM TO COME.

YOU WOULD NEVER KNOW
WHAT I FEEL ABOUT NARAYAN
RAO'S DEATH. HE WAS LIKE
A SON TO ME.

I KNOW YOUR
FEELINGS - ONLY
TOO WELL.



YOUR WORDS SOOTHE ME.
I WANT YOU TO CONTINUE
AS CHIEF JUSTICE IN MY REIGN.
THE PESHWA'S SWORD WILL ALWAYS
STAND BY YOU IN THE CAUSE
OF JUSTICE.

SO ALSO,
IN THE CAUSE OF
JUSTICE I SHALL
DEPRIVE YOU OF THE
SWORD, IF NEED BE.



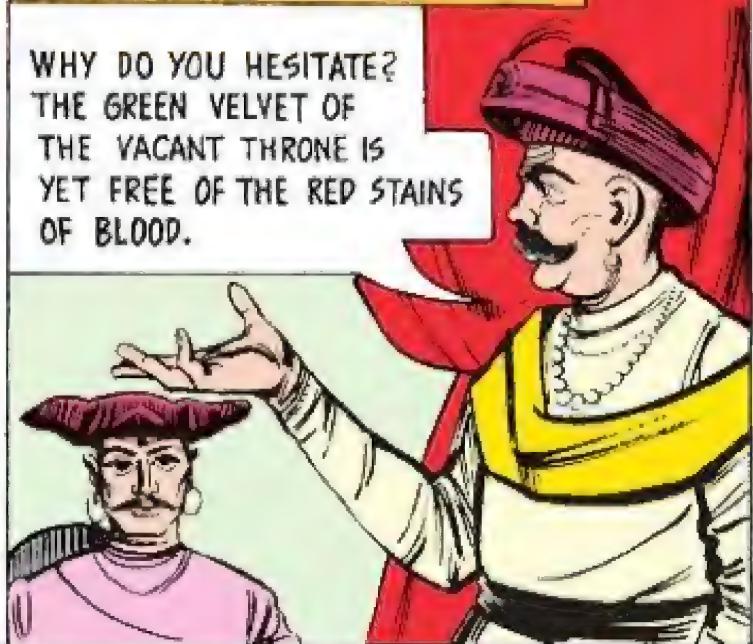
ANANDIBAI WAS IMPATIENT.

COME RAGHOBAB.
THE THRONE WAITS
FOR YOU.



WHEN RAGHUNATH HESITATED—

WHY DO YOU HESITATE?
THE GREEN VELVET OF
THE VACANT THRONE IS
YET FREE OF THE RED STAINS
OF BLOOD.



BY NOW ANANDIBAI SENSED THAT ALL WAS NOT WELL.
SHE BECAME NERVOUS.

COME ON. HURRY.
SIT ON THE THRONE.

HOW CAN HE? A COWARD
LIKE HIM DARE NOT EVEN
TOUCH THE SACRED THRONE.



THE COURTIERS WERE AGHAST.

RAM SHASTRI, BEWARE!
YOU ARE GOING TOO FAR.

HE IS A COWARD!
HE HAS HAD HIS OWN
NEPHEW MURDERED
TO USURP THE THRONE!

ANANDIBAI COULD NOT STAND THIS ANY LONGER.

THIS TRAITOR OPENLY
INSULTS THE PESHWA.
ISN'T THERE ONE
AMONG YOU WHO IS
MAN ENOUGH TO
SILENCE HIM?

NO, ANANDIBAI.
THIS PLACE IS BEREFT
OF MEN. OTHERWISE A
MURDERER WOULD NOT
ASCEND THE THRONE.

RAGHUNATH RAO WAS TERRIFIED.

WHAT? I KILLED
NARAYAN RAO?
NEVER. IT WAS A...

JUST THEN RAGHOBIA'S SOLDIER RUSHED
TOWARDS RAM SHASTRI.

I SHALL SILENCE
YOU FOREVER,
BRAHMAN!

UNDAUNTED RAM SHASTRI STEPPED FORWARD.

THAT'S IT! RAISE YOUR SWORD HIGH. LET THE SUBEDARS OF THE LATE PESHWA SEE THE STAINS OF HIS PURE BLOOD, AND WAKE UP.

RAM SHASTRI PULLED OUT THE LETTER FROM HIS CUMMERBUND.

IN THIS LETTER I HAVE THE EVIDENCE OF YOUR GUILT. AND IT CARRIES THE SEAL OF RAGHOBIA.

ANANDIBAI TURNED PALE WHEN SHE SAW THE LETTER. SHE TURNED TO THE SOLDIERS.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? PUT HIM IN CHAINS.

AS THEY RUSHED FORWARD, TWO SUBEDARS INTERVENED.

BEWARE SOLDIERS! OUR SWORDS ARE DRAWN IN THE SERVICE OF JUSTICE. SHASTRI BUAI! WHAT DOES THE LETTER SAY?

AS AGREED BY US,
YOU WILL KILL
NARAYAN RAO AND
FOR THAT YOU WILL
BE PAID RS. 500,000
IN CASH. PURANDAR FORT
AND THREE SMALLER
FORTS WILL ALSO BE
YOURS.

FOR A MOMENT RAGHOBIA WAS TONGUE-TIED. THEN-

RAM SHASTRI,
NARAYAN RAO
WAS A VICTIM
OF
POLITICS.

YOU ARE THE SHASTRI. YOU
KNOW THE PENALTY FOR
POLITICAL MURDERS. SPEAK
OUT. I APPEAL TO YOU TO.
AND I SHALL ATONE.

THE COURTIERS WERE IMPRESSED BY THE PESHWA'S WORDS, BUT NOT RAM SHASTRI.

FOR HIM THERE WAS NO COMPROMISE
WHERE JUSTICE WAS CONCERNED.

FOR A MURDERER
THERE IS ONLY ONE
PENALTY. DEATH.

SOLDIERS!
CHAIN THE TRAITOR.

BUT—

AHA! ONE STEP MORE
AND YOU WILL
BE DEAD!

SUBEDARS, IT IS FUTILE AS
LONG AS THIS SINNER AND
MURDERER SITS ON THE THRONE
RAM SHASTRI SHALL BE AN ALIEN
IN POONA.

RAM SHASTRI, YOU HAVE
BEEN TRULY LOYAL TO
THE LATE PESHWAS. THE
FIRST SALUTE OF THE DAY
SHALL BE TO YOU.

I AM HONOURED.
I SHALL RETURN, BUT ONLY
WHEN THE THRONE SHAKES
OFF THE MURDERER!

TRUE TO HIS WORD RAM SHASTRI LEFT POONA, AND RETURNED ONLY
WHEN THE POSTHUMOUS SON OF NARAYAN RAO - SAWAI
MADHAV RAO - WAS BORN AND WAS MADE THE PESHWA. FROM THEN
ONWARDS HE WAS THE CHIEF JUSTICE TILL THE END OF HIS DAYS.

WHICH OF THE ACKS HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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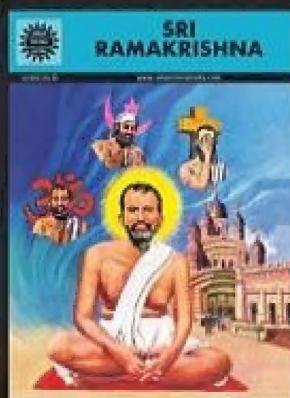


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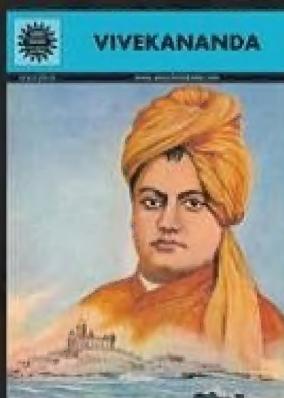
RAM SHASTRI

Even as a child he was known for his honesty and upright behaviour. Ram Shastri started his life as a servant in a rich household. However, his determination to learn the scriptures caught the attention of the resident priest. It was a long and arduous journey but hard work and determination took him to the position of Chief Justice under the Peshwas of Maharashtra. Respected by his peers, Ram Shastri's sense of justice and fair play, at a time when corruption and nepotism held sway, earned him the love and loyalty of the people.

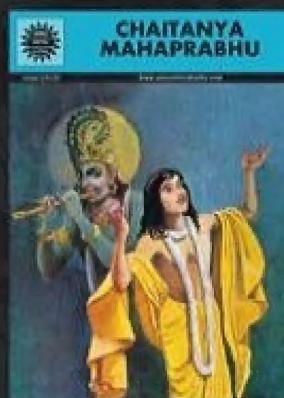
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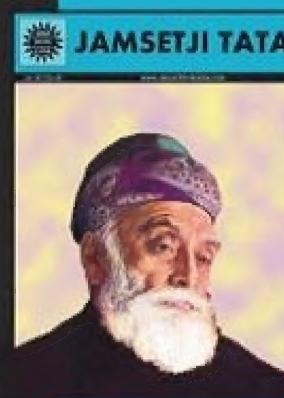
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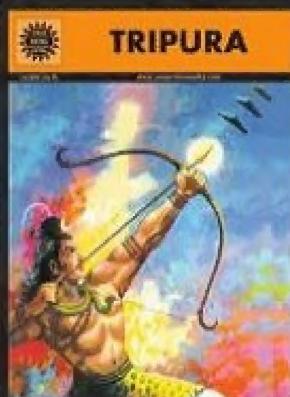


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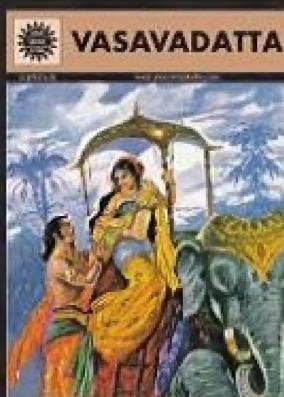
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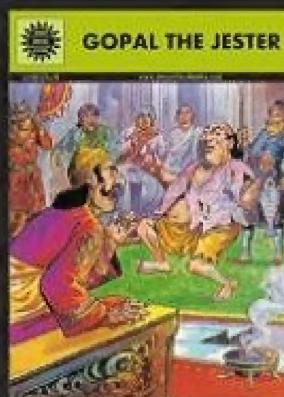
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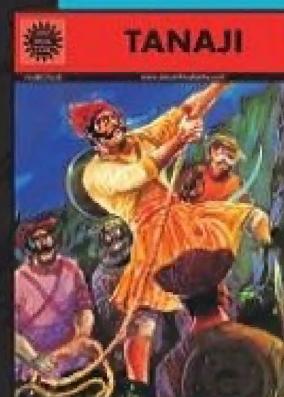
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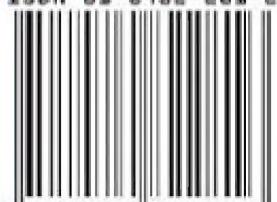
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